



PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

Annual Planning Performance Statistics, 2018/19

This report presents annual statistics on planning decision-making and timescales for 2012/13 to 2018/19. It is based on quarterly data collected by the Scottish Government from Local and Planning Authorities as part of the Planning Performance Framework (introduced in 2012).

Key Findings

In 2018/19 Planning Authorities decided 27,373 local planning applications and 325 major planning applications, across Scotland*.

This includes applications with processing agreements where the developer and local authority agree on timescales for decisions.



Most Planning applications were approved.

In 2018/19 93.7% of all applications with decisions were approved.

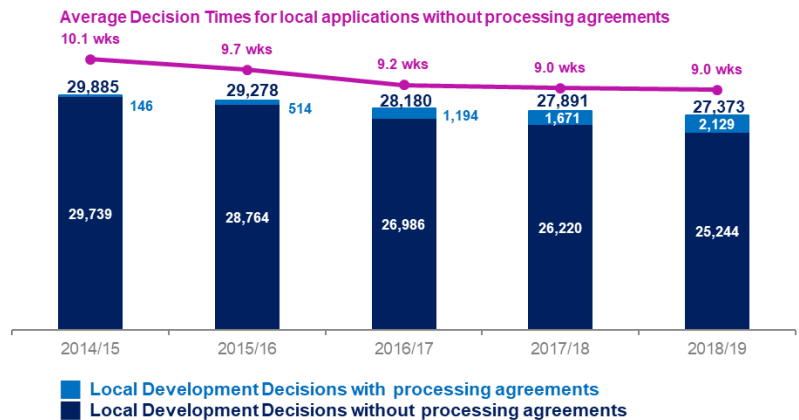


* Classification between local and major depends on the development type. For example, housing is classed as major when the application is for 50 or more dwellings or for sites that exceed two hectares, electricity generation is classed as major when the capacity of the generating station is or exceeds 20 megawatts.

Annual Trends for Local and Major Developments

Average decision time for local developments matches the previous year, which was the quickest annual decision time since 2012/13.

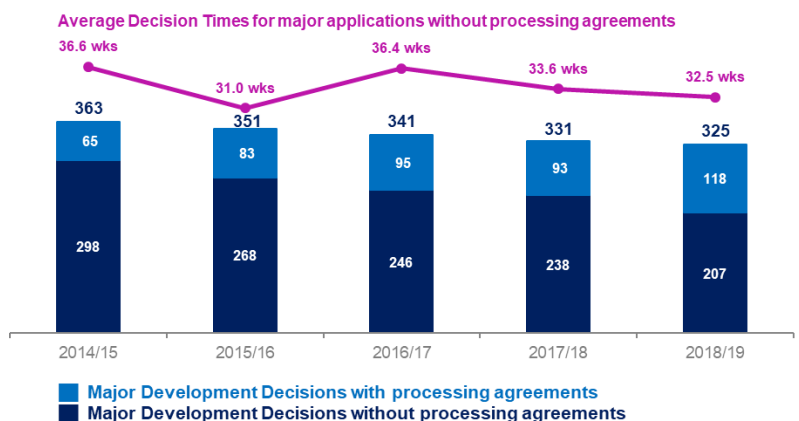
The average decision time for local developments was 9.0 weeks in 2018/19, equal to last year and the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13.



Applications with processing agreements are not included in the calculation of decision times. The use of processing agreements has increased substantially each year since 2014/15 with 8% of all local developments in 2018/19 having processing agreements in place.

Falls in average decision time for major developments since 2016/17.

In 2018/19 the average decision time for major development applications was 32.5 weeks, the quickest since 2015/2016.



Applications with processing agreements are not included in the calculation of decision times. The use of processing agreements has increased substantially each year since 2014/15 with 36% of all major developments in 2018/19 having processing agreements in place.

Number of planning applications continues to fall.

- The number of local and major planning applications with decisions has decreased each year since 2013/14.
- There were 518 fewer local development applications in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.
- There were six fewer major development applications in 2018/19 than in 2017/18.

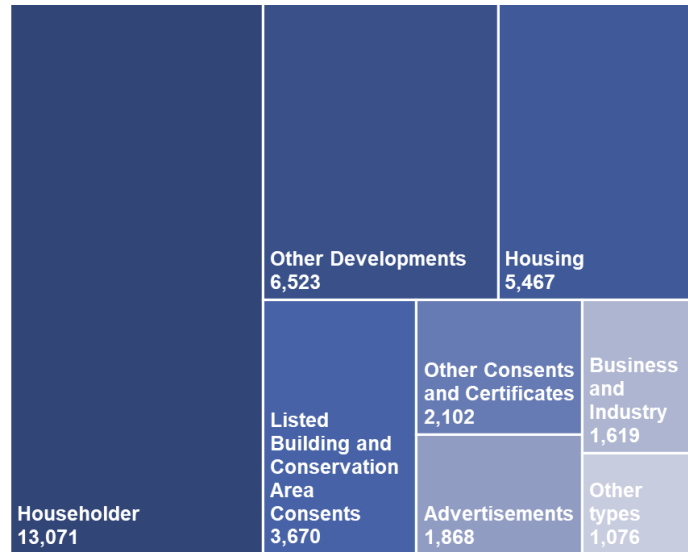
Planning Applications by Development Type

More than a third of planning applications were made by householders

In 2018/19, householders making changes to their properties accounted for more than a third of planning applications (13,071 of 35,396 or 37% of all applications).

Local and major housing developments was the third largest group accounting for 5,467 applications (15% of all applications).

Planning Applications by Development Type, 2018/19

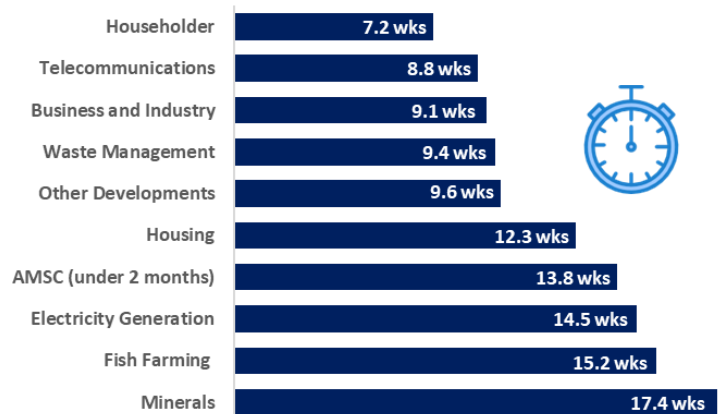


Local development average decision times were quickest for householder applications.

In 2018/19 the average decision time for householders making changes to their properties was 7.2 weeks.

The longest average decision times were for applications for mineral developments, 17.4 weeks.

Local Planning Applications - Average Decision Time (weeks)

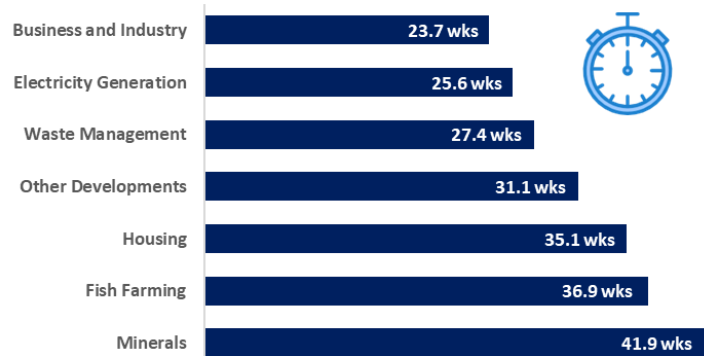


Major development average decision times were quickest for business and industry applications.

In 2018/19 the quickest average decision time, for business and industry applications, was 23.7 weeks.

The longest decision times were for applications for mineral developments, 41.9 weeks.

Major Planning Applications - Average Decision Time

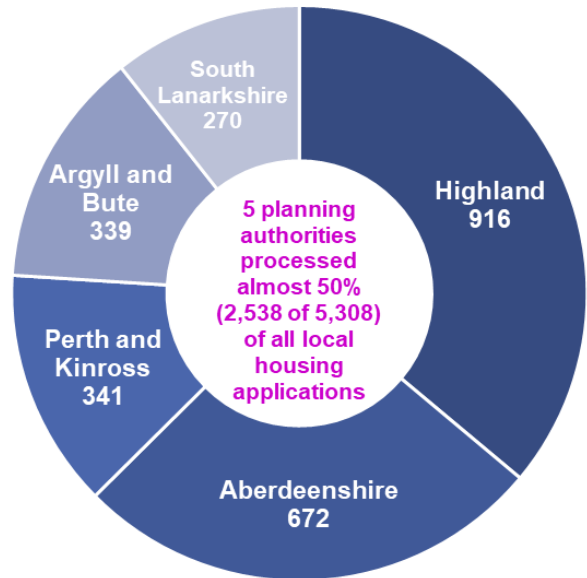


Highland had most planning applications for local housing developments

In 2018-19 almost half (48%) of decisions on local housing applications were made by five local authorities.

Highland made the most, 916 (17% of the Scotland total). This was followed by Aberdeenshire (672), Perth and Kinross (341), Argyll and Bute (339), and South Lanarkshire (270).

*includes applications with processing agreements



Glasgow City had most planning applications for major housing developments

In 2018-19 almost half (48%) of decisions on major housing applications were made by six local authorities.

Glasgow City made the most, 19 (12% of the Scotland total). This was followed by Highland (13), Aberdeenshire (12), North Lanarkshire (11), South Lanarkshire (11) and City of Edinburgh (10).

*includes applications with processing agreements



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to data collection

Planning authority performance data is a statistical collection undertaken to establish the number of planning applications determined by Scottish planning authorities, and their performance in processing them. The Scottish Government Communities Analysis Division collects quarterly data from all 32 local authorities and the two planning authorities (Cairngorms National Park and Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park) on the detail of planning decisions and timescales.

Detailed guidance is available to planning authorities to help with submission of quarterly data. This can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>

1.2 Uses of the Statistics

The key objective of the statistics is to allow Scottish Government and the planning authorities to monitor the performance of planning authorities in the timeliness of deciding planning applications. The statistics monitor the impact of the development management system, part of the modernising planning agenda, which was implemented on 3rd August 2009. Further details are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataUses>.

1.3 Legacy cases

On 3rd August 2009 substantial changes to the statutory development management system, relating to the handling of planning applications, came into effect across the whole of Scotland. A few legacy cases that were validated pre 3rd August 2009 can badly skew results and therefore the analysis in Sections 2 to 5 covers applications validated in the current planning system post 3rd August 2009. For applications decided prior to quarter one 2017/18, where appropriate, figures are provided for both post 3rd August 2009 applications and all applications including legacy cases. From quarter one 2017/18, because of the limited number of legacy cases still being processed, figures are only shown for applications validated post 3rd August 2009. Analysis of the limited number of decided legacy cases is provided separately in [Section 11](#).

1.4 Detailed tables of results

Additional detailed excel tables of the years quarterly and annual results as well as a copy of this summary, along with results for previous years are available in the Planning Authority Performance Statistics Section on the Planning Publications page of the Scottish Government's website at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Publications>.

1.5 Categories of planning applications

For the purpose of planning applications, developments are put into one of three categories: local, major or national. The different types allow councils to treat developments in a way which is suited to their size, complexity and the issues they are likely to raise.

Local developments include applications for changes to individual houses and smaller developments for new housing as well as applications covering areas of development such as minerals, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine finfish farming, marine shellfish farming, telecommunications, Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs¹) and other developments. Most applications for planning permission will be for local developments.

Major developments include applications for 50 or more homes, as well as certain waste, water, transport and energy-related developments, larger retail developments, and other types of major developments. Classification between local and major developments depends on the particular development type. For example, housing developments are classed as major when the application is for 50 or more dwellings or for a site that exceeds two hectares, whereas electricity generation is classed as major when the capacity of the generating station is or exceeds 20 megawatts. Typically there are only a small number of decisions made for major developments each quarter and therefore average decision times are likely to be volatile.

The sub-category “other developments”, used for both major and local developments, includes any developments not falling wholly within any of the specific categories of development for minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, fish farming and AMSCs. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects.

National developments are mainly large public works (for example, the regeneration of the former Ravenscraig steelworks and the redevelopment of the Dundee Waterfront) and are identified in the National Planning Framework (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453683.pdf>).

National Developments are not included in the planning performance statistics analysed in this publication.

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>.

¹ Applications for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs) relate to conditions attached to planning permission in principle requiring the further approval, consent or agreement of the planning authority for any detailed aspect of the development.

1.6 Calculation of decision times

The average decision time in weeks is calculated in days from the date of validation² to the date the decision is issued. The average weeks are then calculated by dividing the number of days by seven.

When calculating cut-off dates for local applications meeting two month targets months are measured from a specific day in one month until the day with the preceding date in the following or subsequent months.

For further explanation of planning performance methodology please refer to Planning Performance Technical Notes.

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>

1.7 Stopping the clock

In some cases it is appropriate to remove a length of time from the total decision time. We have called this process of removing a specific length of time “stopping the clock”. Stopping the clock is used where there has been a lengthy delay caused by the applicant or external consultees, outwith the planning authority’s control that has halted progress with an application. It is for individual authorities to decide what they consider ‘lengthy’ on a case by case basis. This should not be used for every application; it is about recording the data in a way which produces more accurate and relevant performance statistics that would otherwise have been skewed by extreme cases of delay outwith the planning authority’s control.

Details for applications that have had the clock stopped can be found in [Section 12](#).

1.8 Revisions

Additional quality assurance of data was carried out when analysing annual data and some alterations were made to previously published quarterly data. For 2018/19 Quarters 1 and 2 there were a total of 18 revisions made to figures for six local authorities. There were no changes to headline figures.

Details of the revisions have been listed in the latest quarterly publication: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2018/19 Quarterly](#).

The revisions policy for planning performance statistics has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of practice for Official Statistics and further details are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Revisions>.

² The validation date, from which the time period for determination runs, is the date when the final piece of information for an application is received from the applicant.

2. Annual Trends – Local Developments (excludes legacy cases)

Local developments include applications for changes to individual houses and smaller developments for new housing as well as applications covering areas of development such as minerals, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine finfish farming, marine shellfish farming, telecommunications, Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs) and other developments.

Some local developments are subject to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). Results for these developments are not included here and instead are reported separately in the detailed tables ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 28](#)). In 2018/19 26 local development applications subject to EIAs were decided.

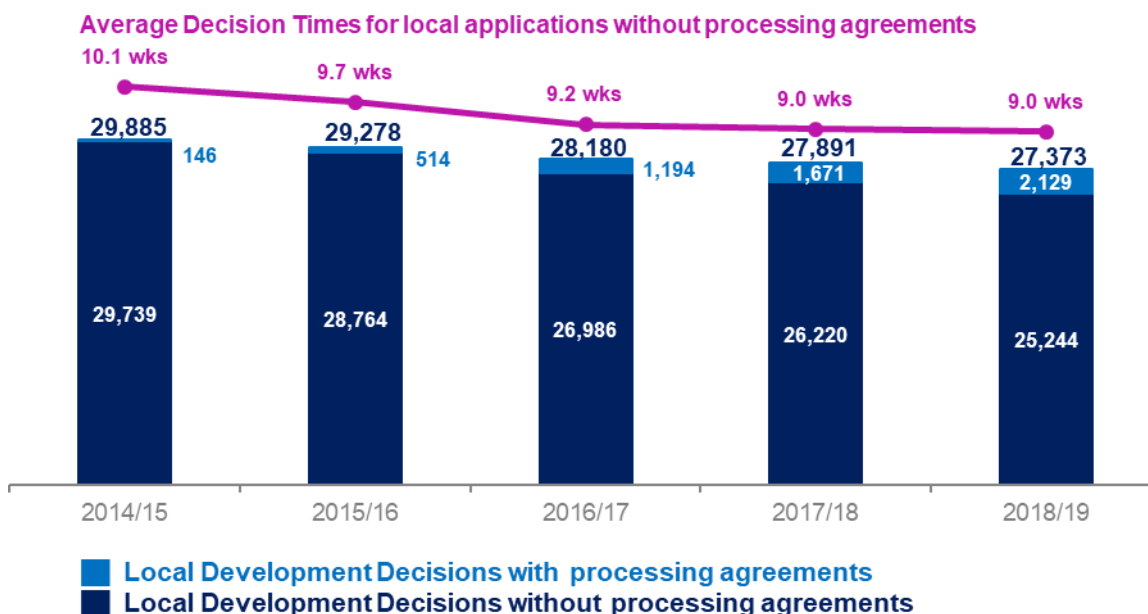
In the longer term trends figures for all applications, which include legacy cases validated before 3rd August 2009, are shown up to the end of 2016/17. From quarter one 2017/18, because of the limited number of legacy cases still being processed, figures are only shown for applications validated post 3rd August 2009.

The figures shown in longer term trends do not include applications subject to a processing agreement as these are not included in average decision time calculations.

2.1. Local Developments – Overview

The overall average decision time for local developments in 2018/19 of 9.0 weeks was the same as the previous year which was the quickest since this data collection started in 2012/13.

Chart 1: All Local Developments



During the year 2018/19 there was a total of 1,630 local development decisions where the clock had been stopped at some point within the application process (6.5% of all local development decisions). On average just over 13 weeks has been removed from the decision times for these applications, and this will have had an effect on overall average decision times. See [Section 12](#) for further details on the use of clock stops.

In 2018/19 the average decision times for householder (7.2 weeks), local business and industry developments (9.1 weeks), and local other developments (9.6 weeks) were all the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. There was a slight increase of less than a day in the average decision time for local housing applications compared to 2017/18.

2.2. Local Developments - Longer term trends

This section presents annual information on average timescales across all local developments not subject to processing agreements, along with separate figures for key categories. Information on decisions for all specific categories of developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2018/19 Annual](#).

2.2.1. All Local Developments

Chart 2: All Local Developments: Number of decisions

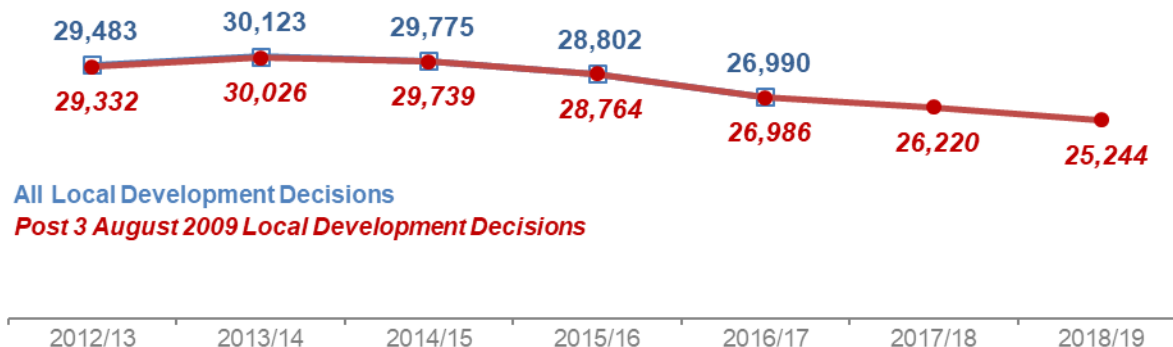


Chart 3: All Local Developments: Average decision time

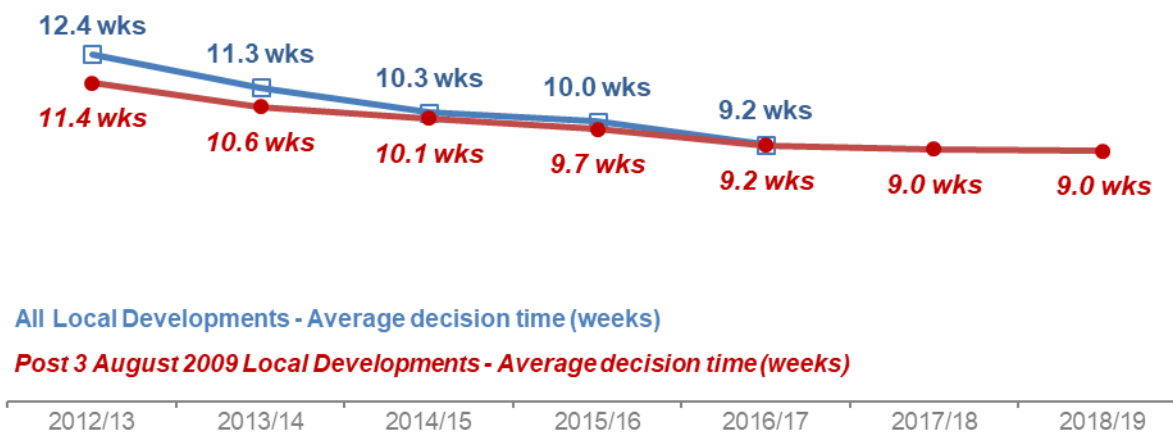
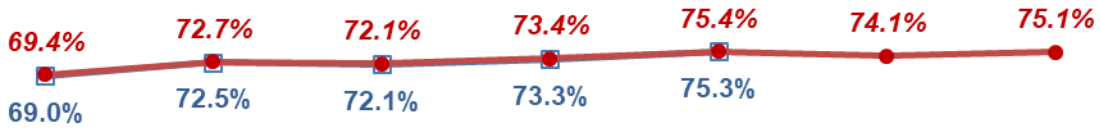


Chart 4: All Local Developments: Percentage under two months



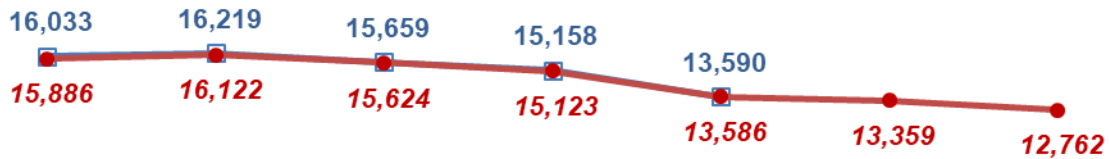
Post 3 August 2009 Local Developments - Percentage of decisions within 2 months
All Local Developments - Percentage of decisions within 2 months



2.2.2. Local Non-Householder Developments

This can include applications for smaller developments for new housing as well as applications covering areas of development such as minerals, business and industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine finfish farming, marine shellfish farming, telecommunications, Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions (AMSCs) and other developments.

Chart 5: Local Non-Householder Developments: Number of decisions



All Local Non Householder Development Decisions
Post 3 August 2009 Local Non Householder Development Decisions

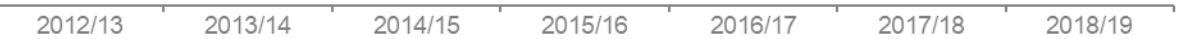
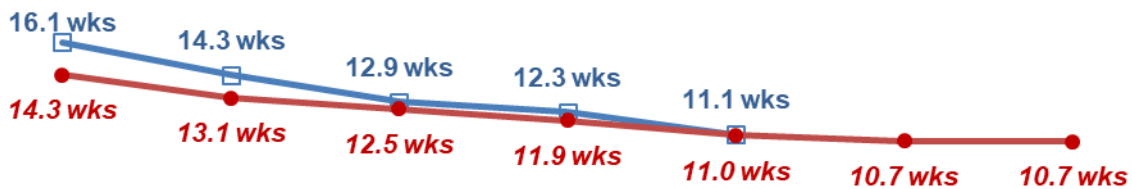


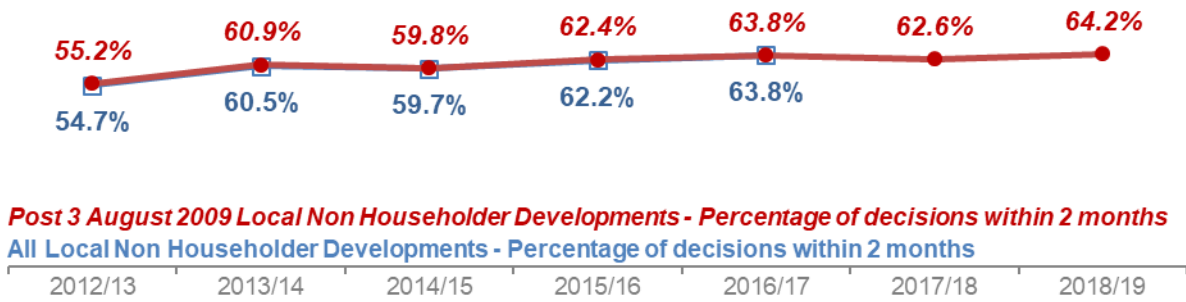
Chart 6: Local Non-Householder Developments: Average decision time



All Local Non Householder Developments - Average decision times (weeks)
Post 3 August 2009 Local Non Householder Developments - Average decision times (weeks)



Chart 7: Local Non-Householder Developments: Percentage under two months



2.2.3. Householder Developments

These include all applications for development in the curtilage of a residential property which are not change of use, for example: extensions, alterations to garages, swimming pools, walls, fences, driveways or porches.

Chart 8: Householder Developments: Number of decisions

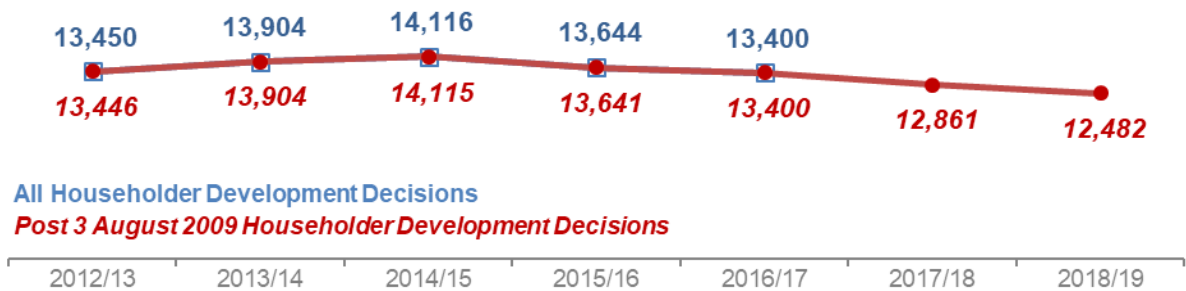


Chart 9: Householder Developments: Average decision time

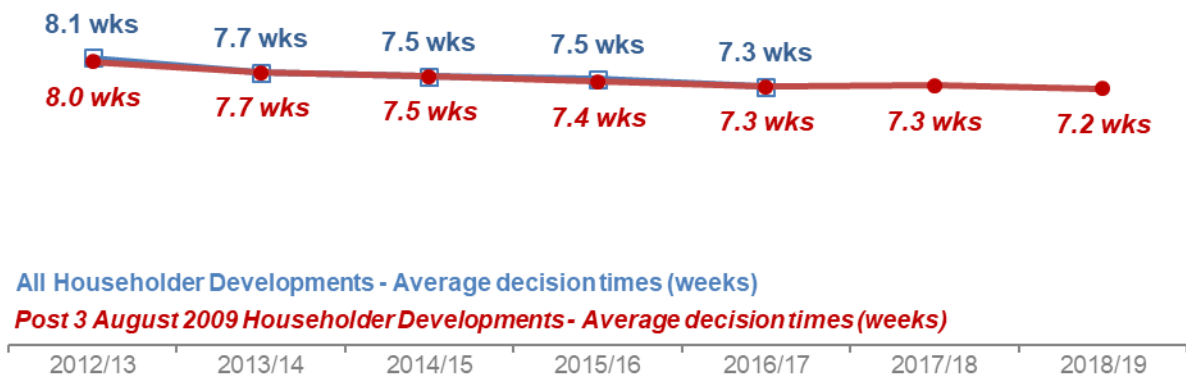
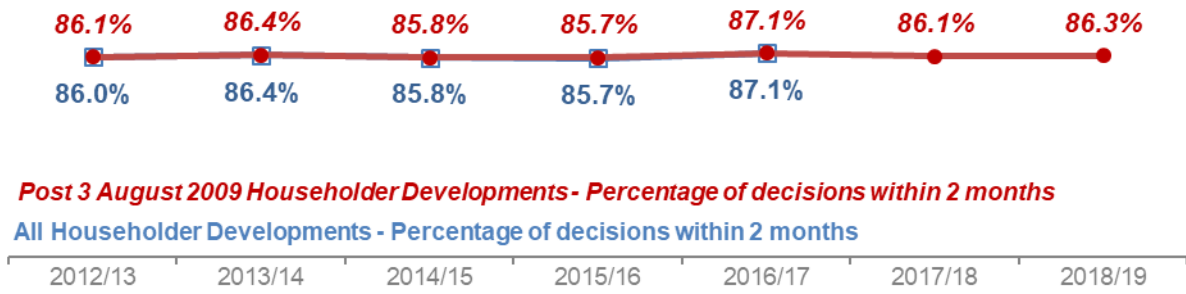


Chart 10: Householder Developments: Percentage under two months



2.2.4. Local Housing Developments

Local Housing developments are those that have less than 50 dwellings and a site area that is less than 2 hectares.

Chart 11: Local Housing Developments: Number of decisions

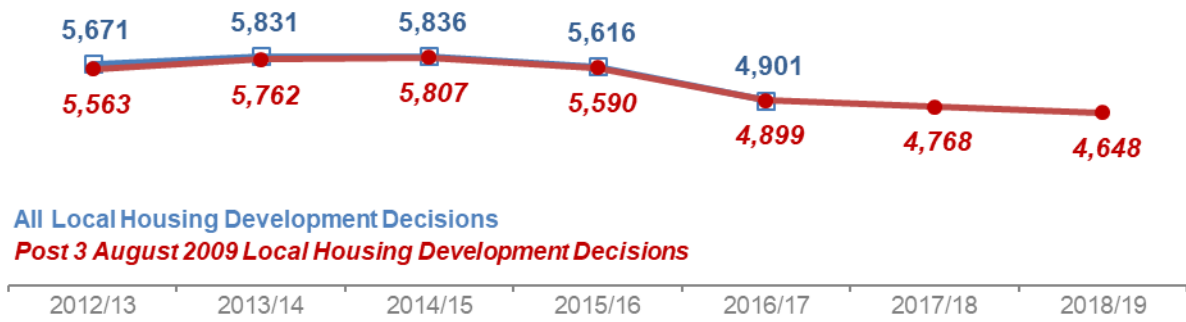


Chart 12: Local Housing Developments: Average decision time

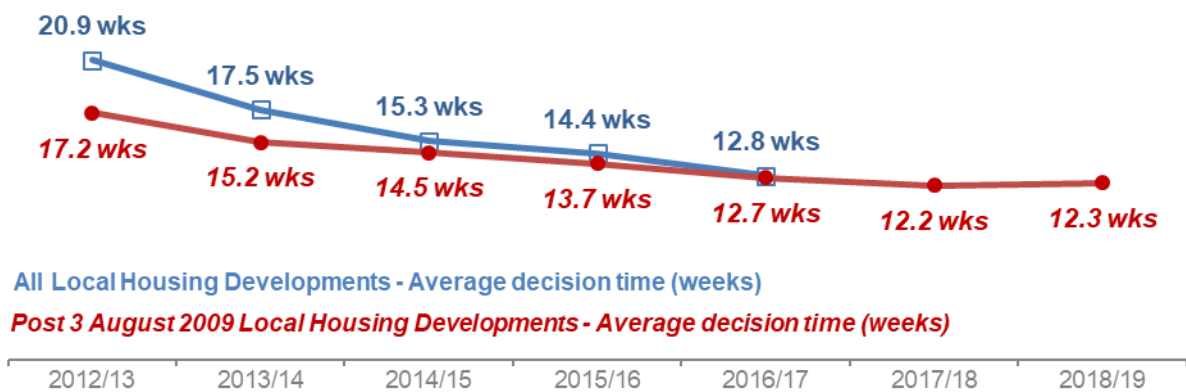
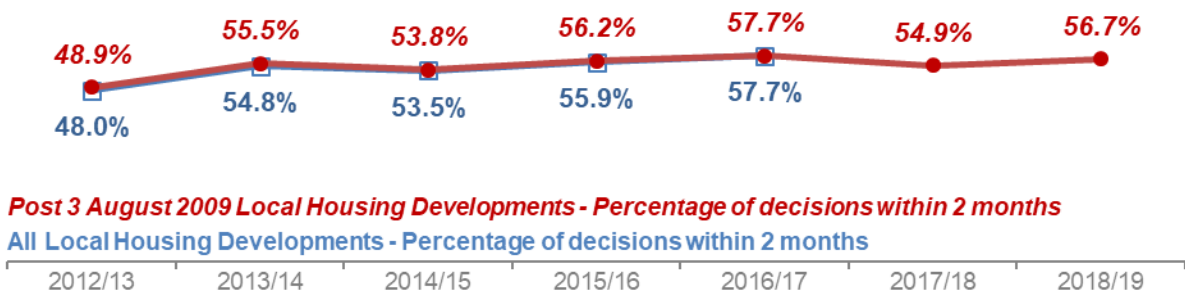


Chart 13: Local Housing Developments: Percentage under two months



2.2.5. Local Business and Industry Developments

Business and Industry developments include construction of a building or structure for any of the following: use as an office, for research and development of products or processes, for any industrial process or for use for storage or as a distribution centre.

To be classed as local the gross floor space as a result of the development must not exceed 10,000 square metres and the site area less than 2 hectares.

Chart 14: Local Business and Industry Developments: Number of decisions

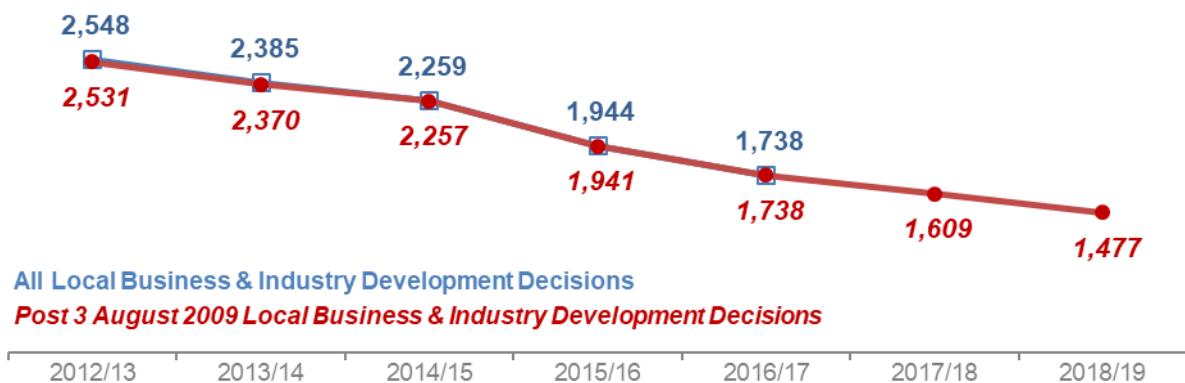


Chart 15: Local Business and Industry Developments: Average decision time

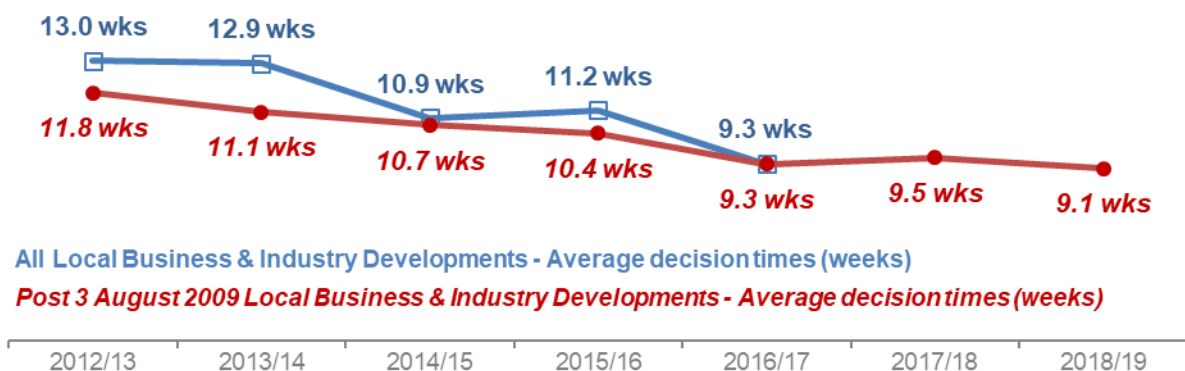
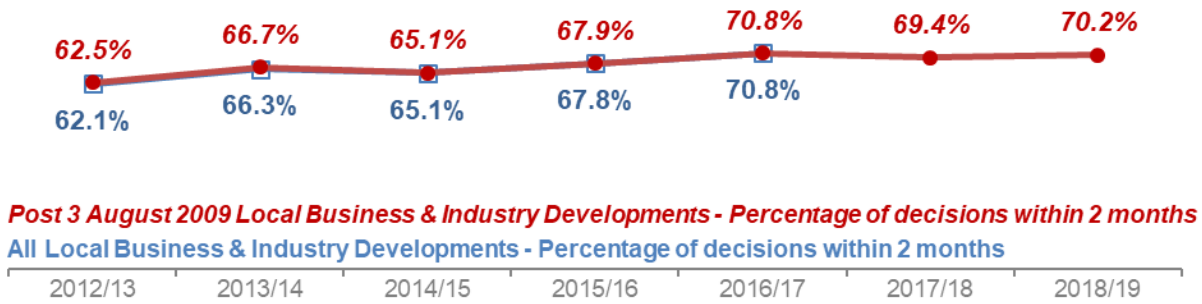


Chart 16: Local Business and Industry Developments: Percentage under two months



2.2.6. Local Electricity Generation Developments

This includes all types of electricity generating stations. Local Electricity Generation developments are those where the capacity is less than 20 megawatts.

Chart 17: Local Electricity Generation Developments: Number of decisions

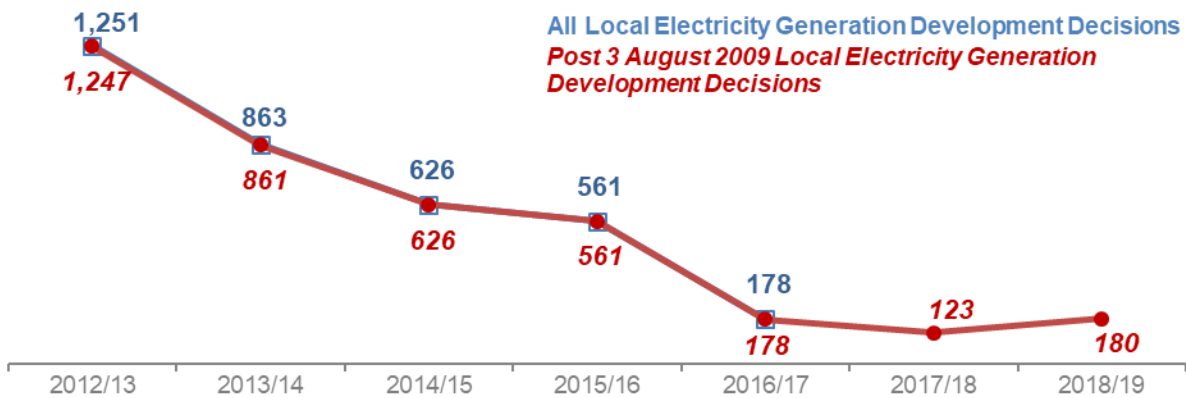


Chart 18: Local Electricity Generation Developments: Average decision time

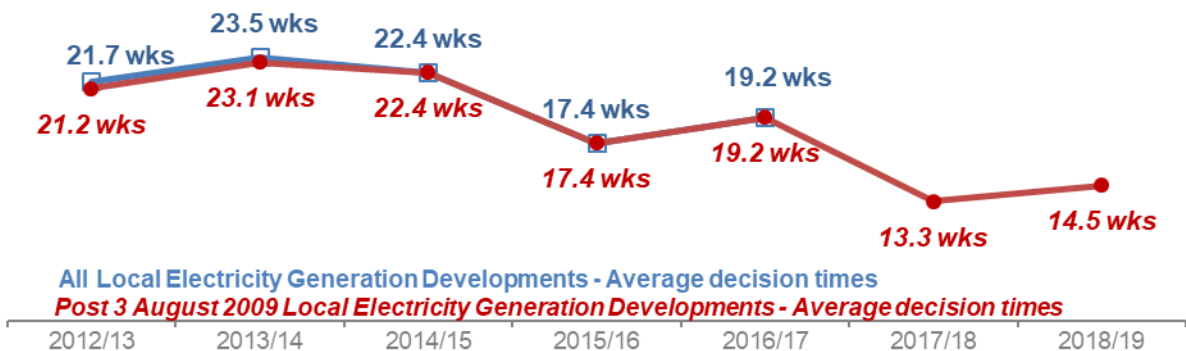
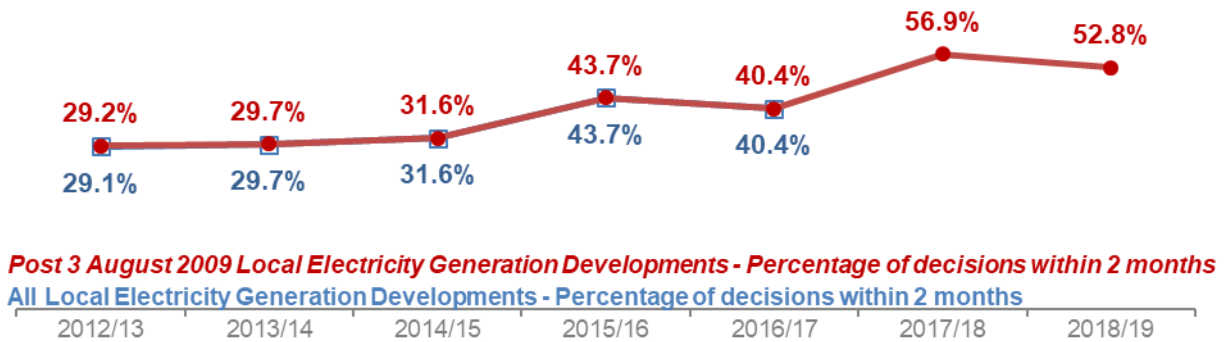


Chart 19: Local Electricity Generation Developments: Percentage under two months



2.2.7. Local Other Developments

Other Developments are developments not falling wholly within any other single class. They include but are not limited to retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. This class also covers mixed use projects.

Local Other Developments are those where the gross floor space of any building, structure or erection as a result of such development is less than 5,000 square metres and the area of the site is less than 2 hectares.

Chart 20: Local Other Developments: Number of decisions

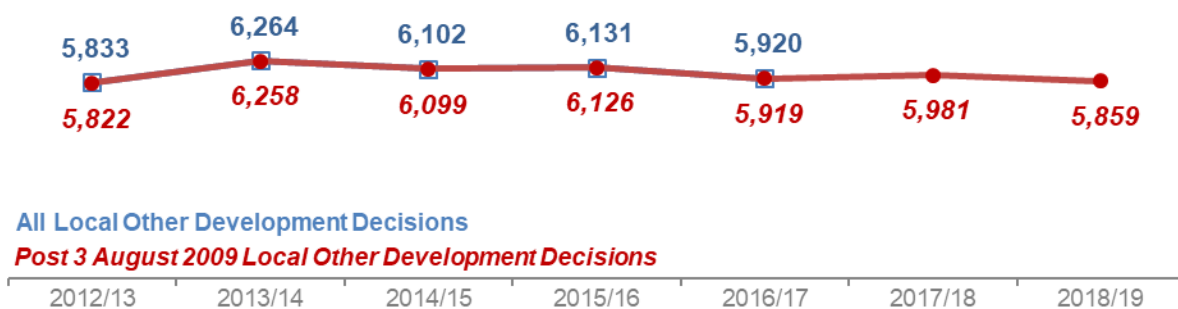


Chart 21: Local Other Developments: Average decision time

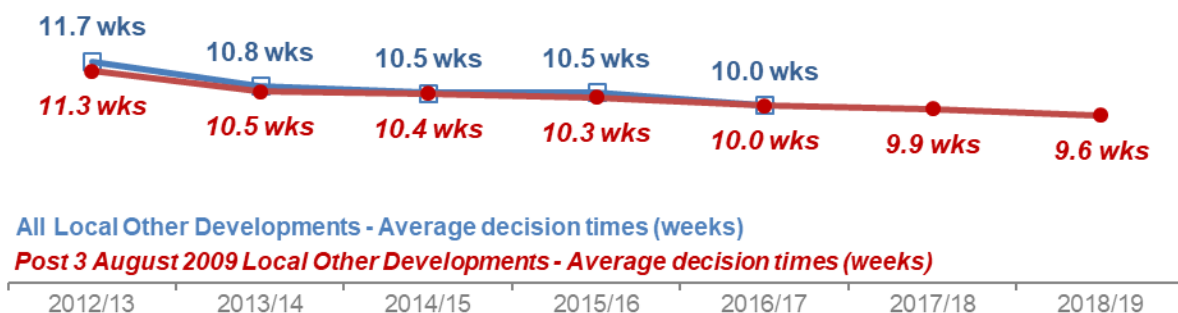
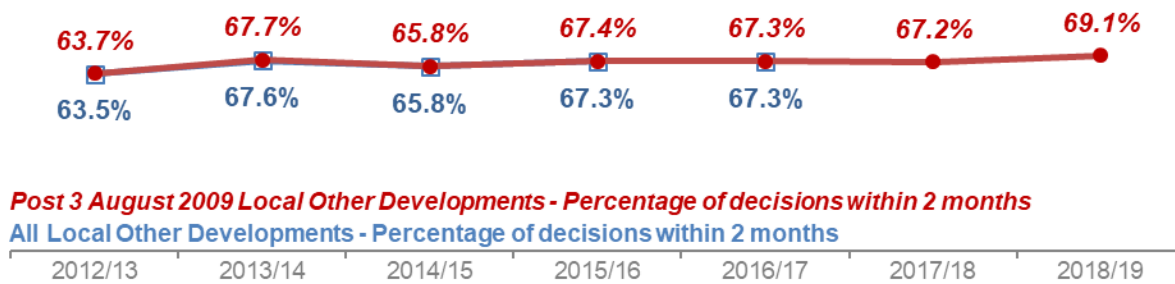


Chart 22: Local Other Developments: Percentage under two months



3. Annual Trends – Major Developments (excludes legacy cases)

Major developments include applications for developments of 50 or more homes, as well as other applications covering areas of development such as minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine finfish farming, marine shellfish farming and other developments.

Classification between local and major developments depends on the particular development type. For example, housing developments are classed as major when the application is for 50 or more dwellings or for a site that exceeds two hectares, whereas electricity generation is classed as major when the capacity of the generating station is or exceeds 20 megawatts.

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>.

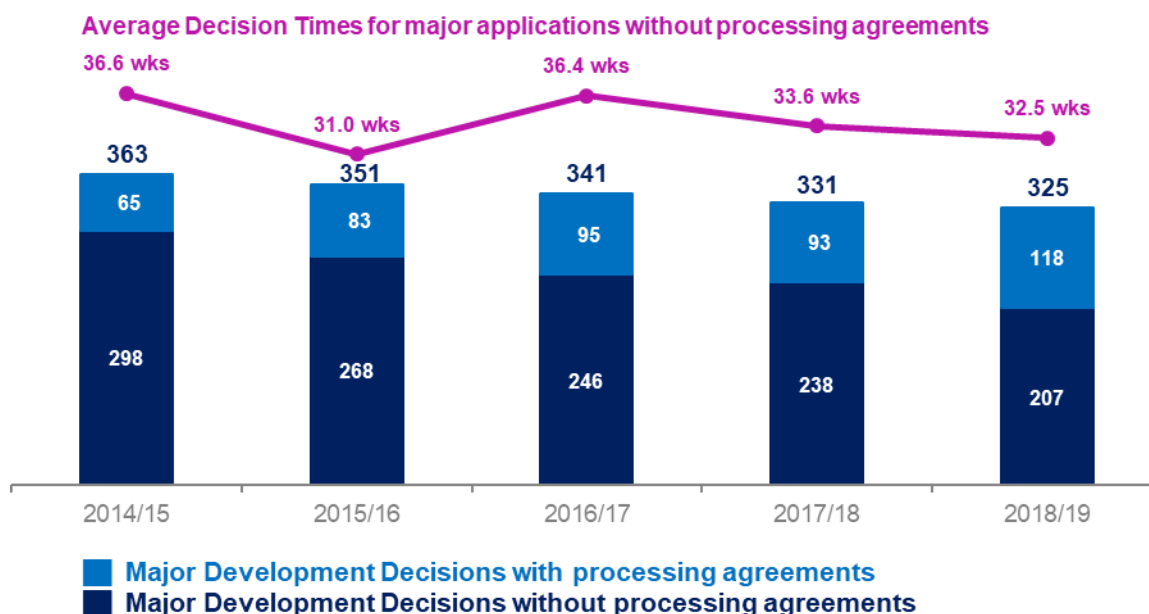
For the longer trends figures for all applications, which include legacy cases validated before 3rd August 2009, are shown up to the end of 2016/17. From quarter one 2017/18, because of the limited number of legacy cases still being processed, figures are only shown for applications validated post 3rd August 2009.

Figures shown in longer term trends do not include applications subject to a processing agreement as these are not included in average decision time calculations.

3.1. Major Developments – Overview

The overall average decision time of 32.5 weeks for major developments in 2018/19 not subject to a processing agreement is quicker than the previous two years.

Chart 23: Total Applications for Major Developments



During the year 2018/19 52 applications, just over a quarter (25.1%) of all major development decisions not subject to a processing agreement had involved a clock stop at some point within the application process. The average time stopped was 39.3 weeks for these applications. This will have had an effect on overall average decision times. See [Section 12](#) for further details on clock stops.

In 2018/19 the average decision times for housing (35.1 weeks) and electricity generation (25.6 weeks) were the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. The average decision time for business and industry applications (23.7 weeks) was quicker than the previous two years. There was an increase of just over three days in the average decision time for major Other Development applications compared with 2017/18.

3.2. Major Developments - Longer term trends

This section presents annual information on average timescales across all major developments not subject to processing agreements, along with separate figures for key categories. Information on decisions for all specific categories of developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2018/19 Annual](#).

3.2.1. All Major Developments

Chart 24: All Major Developments: Number of decisions

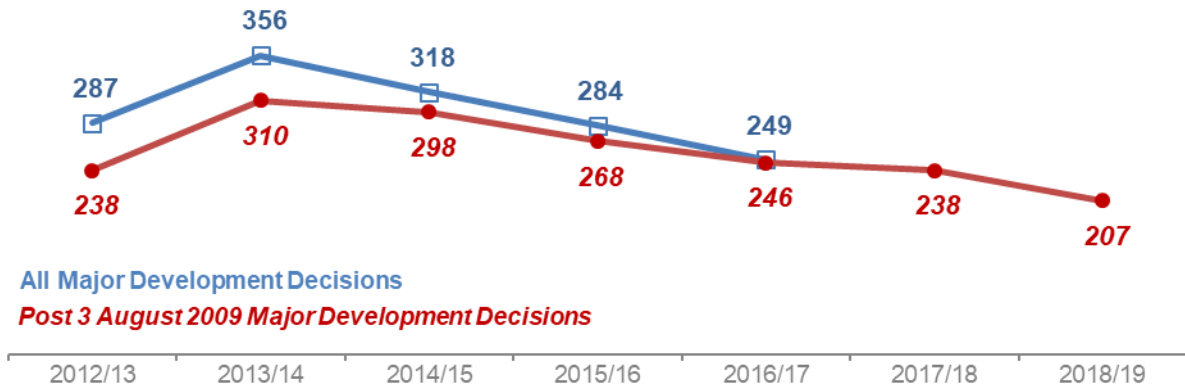
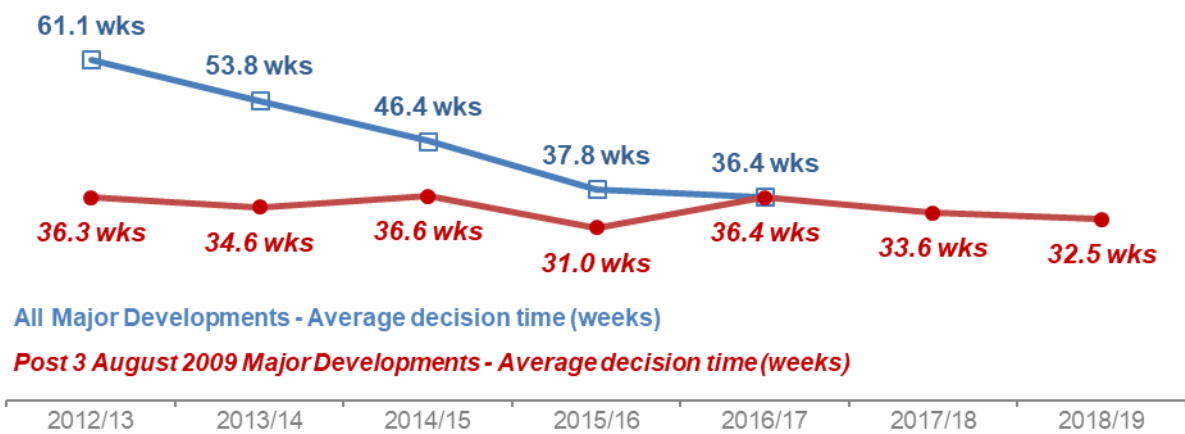


Chart 25: All Major Developments: Average decision time



3.2.2. Major Housing Developments

Major Housing developments are those with 50 or more dwellings or with a site area that is or exceeds 2 hectares where the predominant use is for housing.

Chart 26: Major Housing Developments: Number of decisions

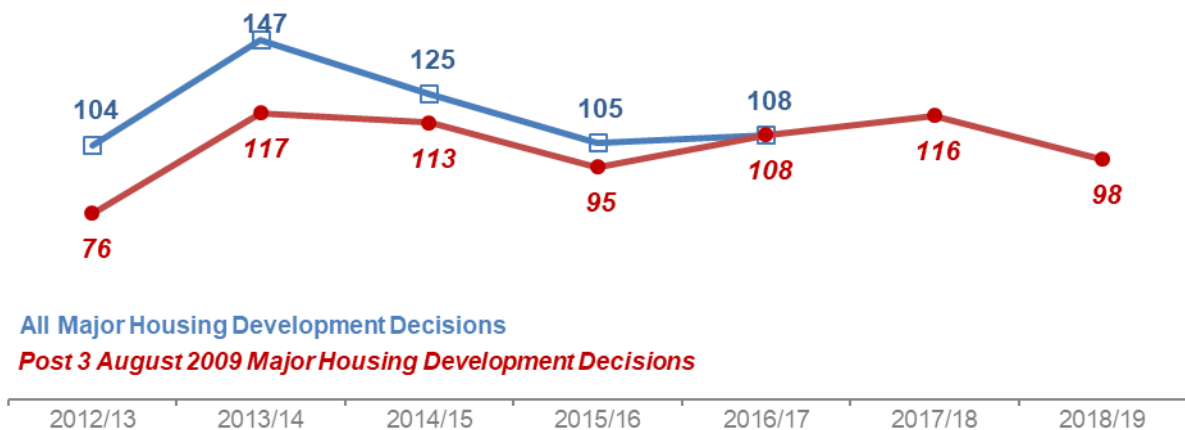
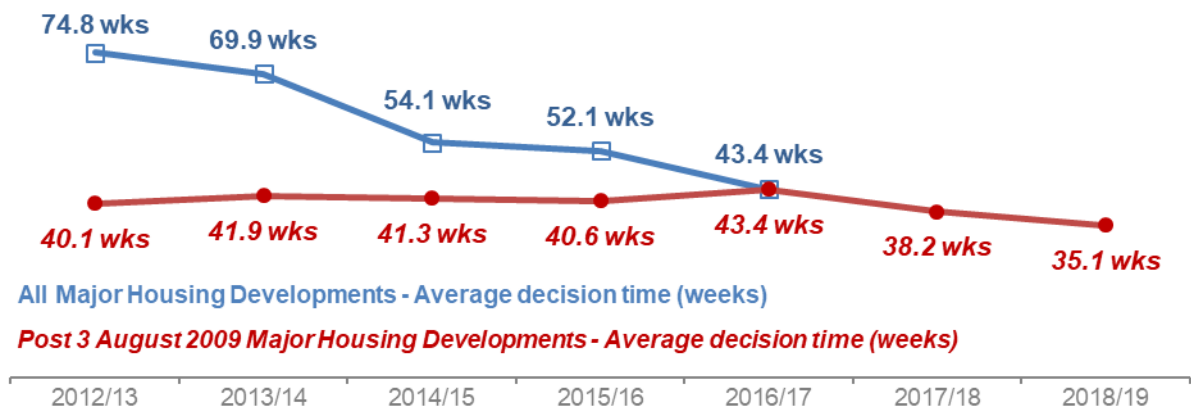


Chart 27: Major Housing Developments: Average decision time



3.2.3. Major Business and Industry Developments

These include construction of a building or structure for any of the following: use as an office, for research and development of products or processes, for any industrial process or for use for storage or as a distribution centre.

To be classed as major the gross floor space as a result of the development must exceed 10,000 square metres or the site must exceed 2 hectares.

Chart 28: Major Business and Industry Developments: Number of decisions

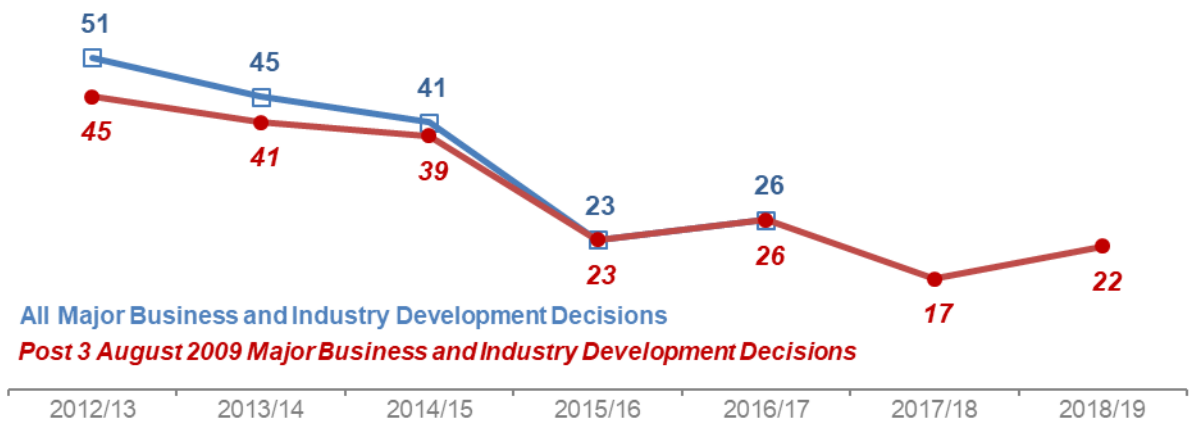
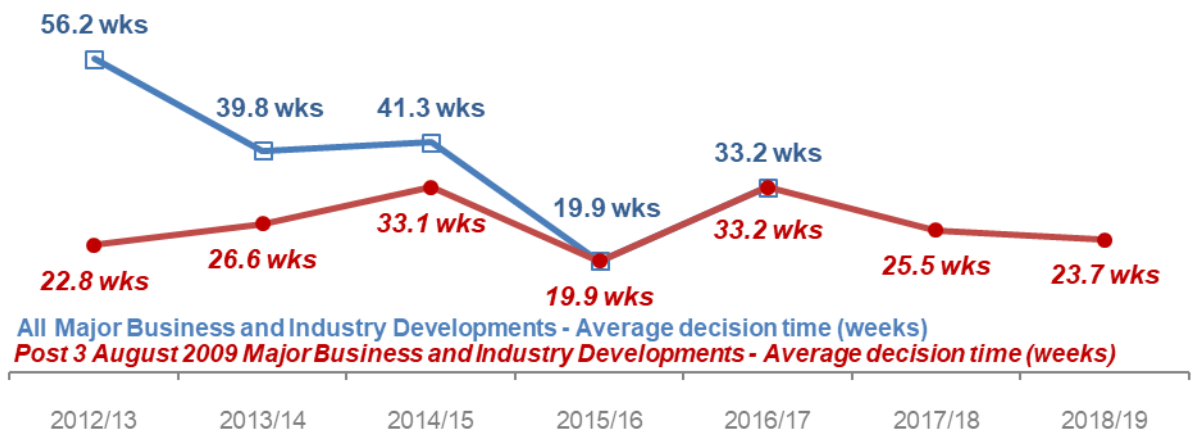


Chart 29: Major Business and Industry Developments: Average decision time



3.2.4. Major Electricity Generation Developments

This includes all types of electricity generating stations. Major Electricity Generation developments are those where the capacity is or exceeds 20 megawatts.

Chart 30: Major Electricity Generation Developments: Number of decisions

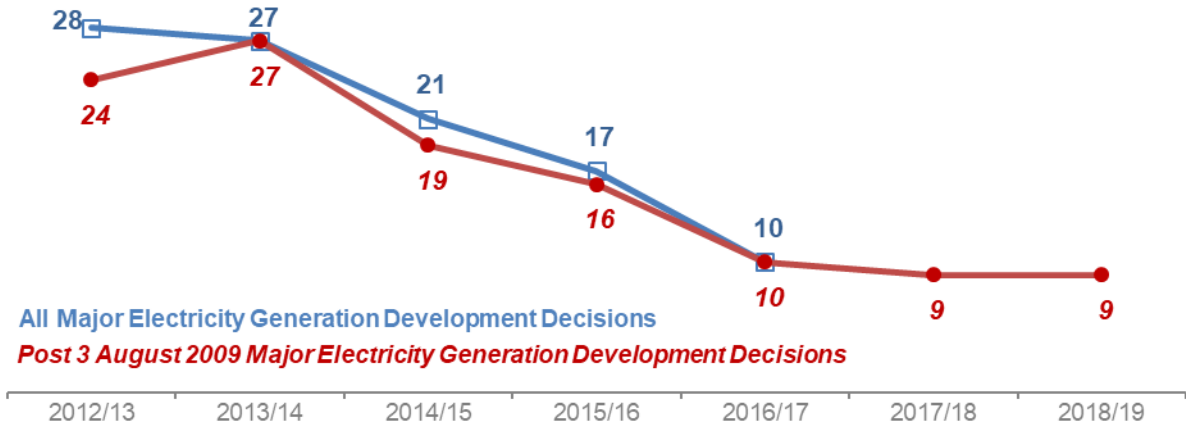
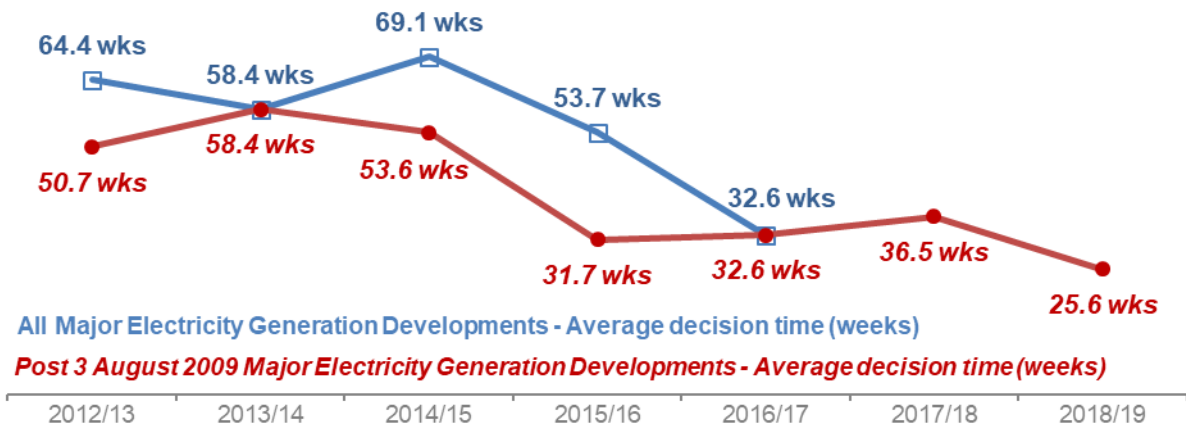


Chart 31: Major Electricity Generation Developments: Average decision time



3.2.5. Major Other Developments

Other developments are developments not falling wholly within any other single class. They include but are not limited to retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. This class also covers mixed use projects.

Major Other Developments are where the gross floor space of any building, structure or erection as a result of such development is or exceeds 5,000 square metres or the area of the site is or exceeds 2 hectares.

Chart 32: Major Other Developments: Number of decisions

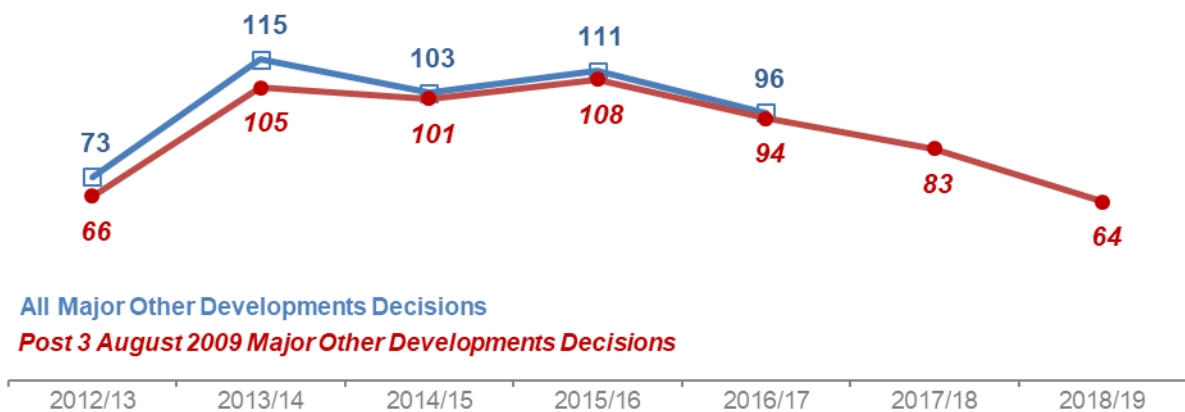
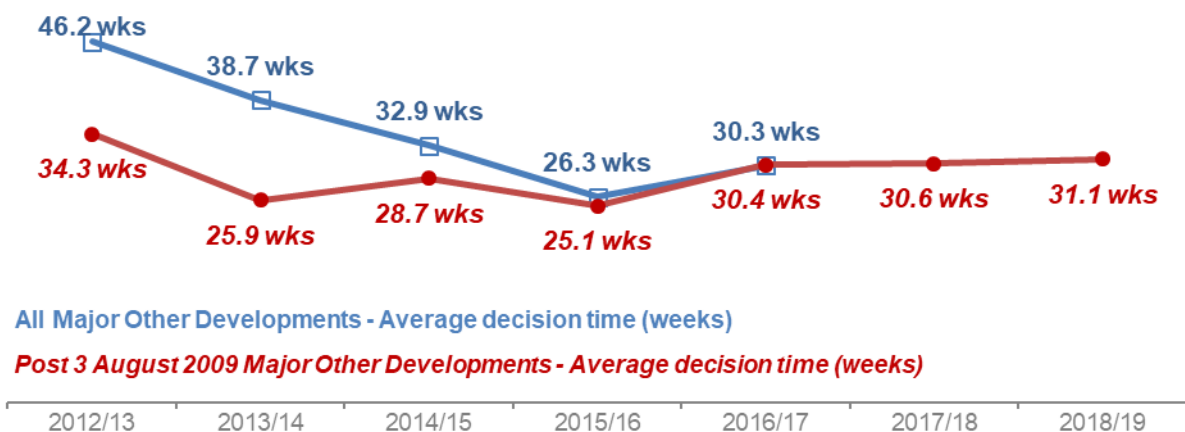


Chart 33: Major Other Developments: Average decision time



4. Processing Agreements

Some local authorities use processing agreements ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 1](#)), where the developer and the local authority agree on timescales for decisions. Some processing agreements are made at the outset of an application whereas others have been activated at a later stage.

Applications subject to a processing agreement are not included in average decision time calculations and are reported separately in this section.

For the year 2018/19 there were a total of 2,716 applications that were subject to a processing agreement, with 75.3% of these processed within agreed timescales. This is an increase of 29% in the number of applications with processing agreements compared with the previous year.

Chart 34: Applications for Local Developments with processing agreements

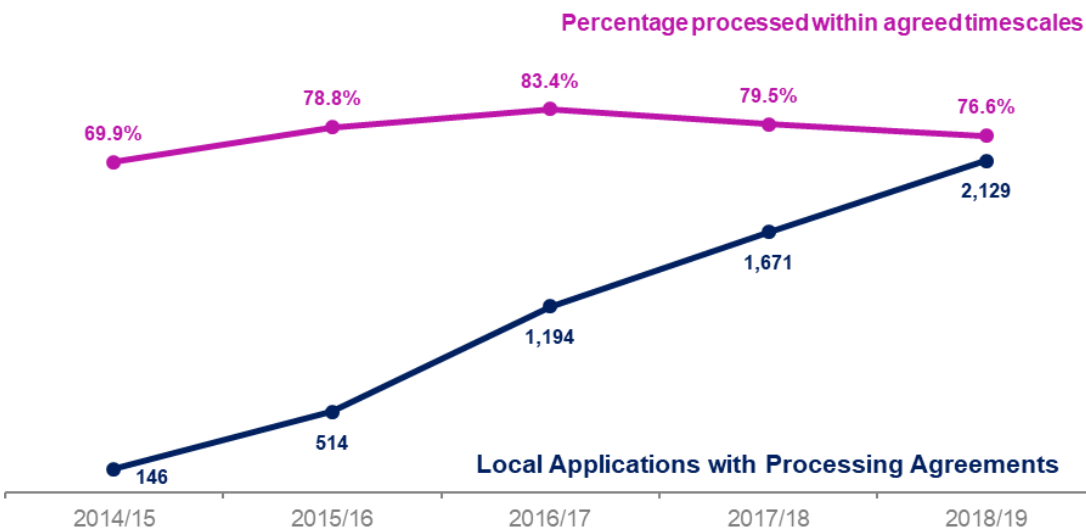
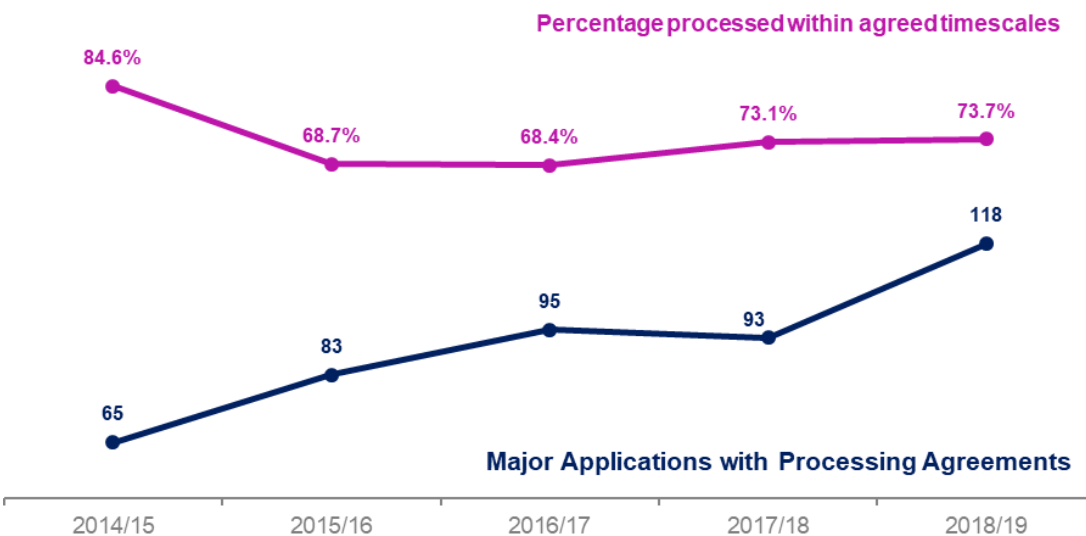


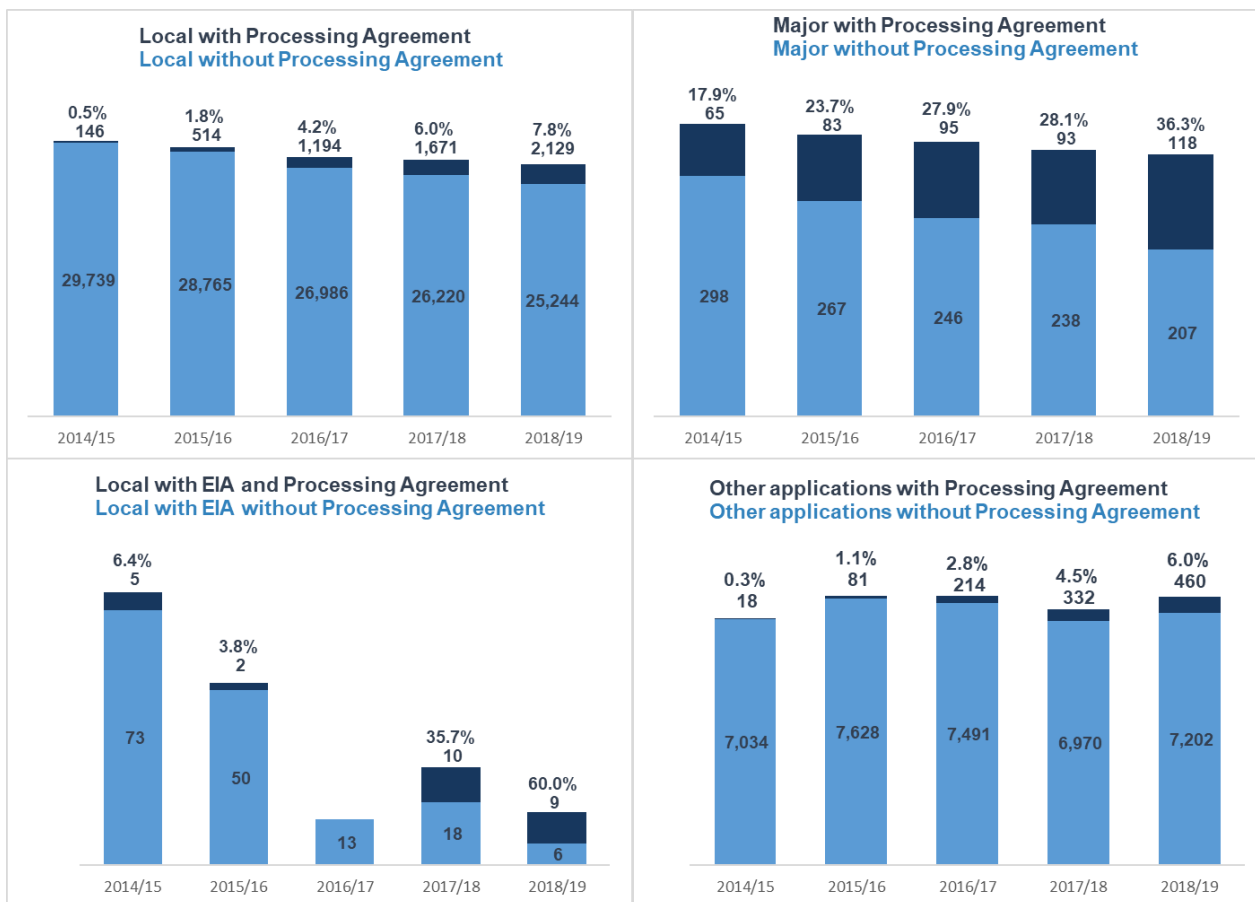
Chart 35: Applications for Major Developments with processing agreements



Of the 2,716 applications that were subject to a processing agreement in 2018/19, 2,129 were for local developments with 76.6% processed within agreed timescales. This represents 7.8% of all local development applications concluded in 2018/19. The proportion of local applications that have processing agreements continues to increase each year.

The 118 major applications concluded by the use of a processing agreement, 73.7% of which were processed within agreed timescales, represents 36.3% of all major development applications concluded in 2018/19. The proportion of major applications with processing agreements has increased substantially since the previous year.

Chart 36: Proportion of applications with processing agreements



30 out of 34 planning authorities used processing agreements in 2018/19. Fife, Aberdeenshire and Scottish Borders with 478, 473, and 405 processing agreements respectively had half of the total number of agreements.

5. Applications by Development Type

5.1. Local Developments

The average decision time for 25,244 (post 3rd August 2009) local applications not subject to processing agreements in 2018/19 was 9.0 weeks. The number of decisions and average decision times vary between types of development (Tables 1 and 2).

In addition, there were 2,129 local developments decided in 2018/19 that had processing agreements in place. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

The largest share of local developments is for householder developments (almost 50%) and these have the shortest average decision time (7.2 weeks). Mineral applications (0.1% of all local decisions) have the longest average decision time (17.4 weeks).

Chart 37: Local Developments: Number of decisions

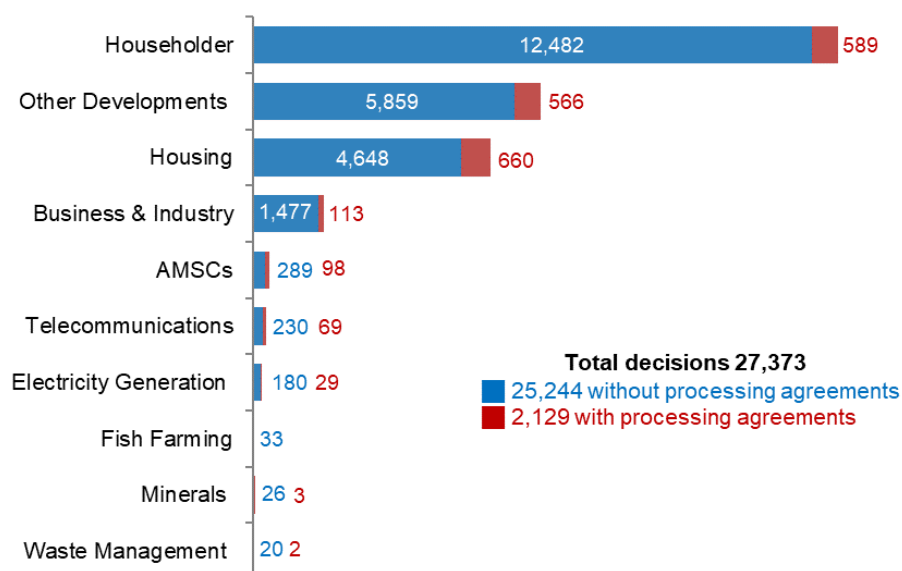
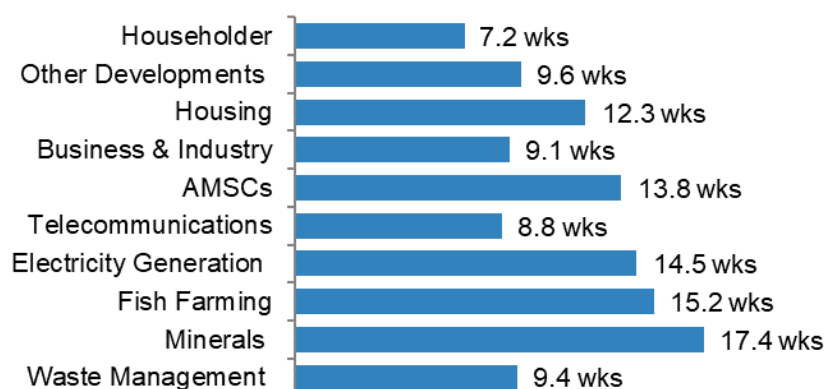


Chart 38: Local Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



Average decision time for applications without processing agreements = 9.0 weeks

Table 1: Post 3 August 2009 Applications: Local Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type¹

Post-3rd August Local Developments	2018/19		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder	12,482	7.2	12,861	7.3	13,400	7.3	13,641	7.4	14,115	7.5	13,904	7.7	13,446	8.0
Other Developments	5,859	9.6	5,981	9.9	5,919	10.0	6,126	10.3	6,099	10.4	6,258	10.5	5,822	11.3
Housing	4,648	12.3	4,768	12.2	4,899	12.7	5,590	13.7	5,807	14.5	5,762	15.2	5,563	17.2
Business & Industry	1,477	9.1	1,609	9.5	1,738	9.3	1,941	10.4	2,257	10.7	2,370	11.1	2,531	11.8
Telecommunications	230	8.8	504	8.7	457	8.1	441	7.9	416	7.6	404	8.5	301	8.5
AMSCs	289	13.8	284	13.9	294	14.5	319	13.0	318	14.8	302	17.4	255	16.3
Electricity Generation	180	14.5	123	13.3	178	19.2	561	17.4	626	22.4	861	23.1	1,247	21.2
Fish Farming	33	15.2	56	9.3	44	8.5	84	9.4	53	13.3	63	12.5	43	10.6
Minerals	26	17.4	17	27.1	28	19.9	39	35.0	25	17.7	47	15.8	35	26.9
Waste Management	20	9.4	17	16.6	29	11.6	22	10.8	23	17.8	55	19.4	89	16.3
TOTAL	25,244	9.0	26,220	9.0	26,986	9.2	28,764	9.7	29,739	10.1	30,026	10.6	29,332	11.4

Table 2: All Applications: Local Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type^{1,2}

All Applications Local Developments	2018/19		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder					13,400	7.3	13,644	7.5	14,116	7.5	13,904	7.7	13,450	8.1
Other Developments					5,920	10.0	6,131	10.5	6,102	10.5	6,264	10.8	5,833	11.7
Housing					4,901	12.8	5,616	14.4	5,836	15.3	5,831	17.5	5,671	20.9
Business & Industry					1,738	9.3	1,944	11.2	2,259	10.9	2,385	12.9	2,548	13.0
Telecommunications					457	8.1	441	7.9	416	7.6	404	8.5	301	8.5
AMSCs					294	14.5	319	13.0	319	15.1	303	18.0	255	16.3
Electricity Generation					178	19.2	561	17.4	626	22.4	863	23.5	1,251	21.7
Fish Farming					44	8.5	84	9.4	53	13.3	63	12.5	43	10.6
Minerals					28	19.9	40	35.1	25	17.7	49	22.3	36	31.6
Waste Management					30	15.5	22	10.8	23	17.8	57	26.8	95	28.7
TOTAL					26,990	9.2	28,802	10.0	29,775	10.3	30,123	11.3	29,483	12.4

1. Figures do not include applications subject to processing agreements

2. The analysis in Sections 2 to 5 covers applications validated in the current planning system, post 3rd August 2009. For applications decided prior to quarter one 2017/18, where appropriate, figures are provided for both post 3rd August 2009 applications and all applications including legacy cases. From quarter one 2017/18, because of the limited number of legacy cases still being processed, figures are only shown for applications validated post 3rd August 2009. Analysis of the limited number of decided legacy cases is provided separately in [Section 11](#).

5.2. Major Developments

The average decision time for 207 (post 3rd August 2009) major applications not subject to processing agreements in 2018/19 was 32.5 weeks. The number of decisions and average decision times vary between types of development (Tables 3 and 4).

In addition, there were 118 major developments decided in 2018/19 that had processing agreements in place. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

Almost half (49%) of major developments are for housing developments, these have an average decision time of 35.1 weeks.

The shortest average decision time of 23.7 weeks is for Business and Industry developments, the longest average decision time is for Mineral applications (41.9 weeks).

Chart 39: Major Developments by Development Type: Number of decisions

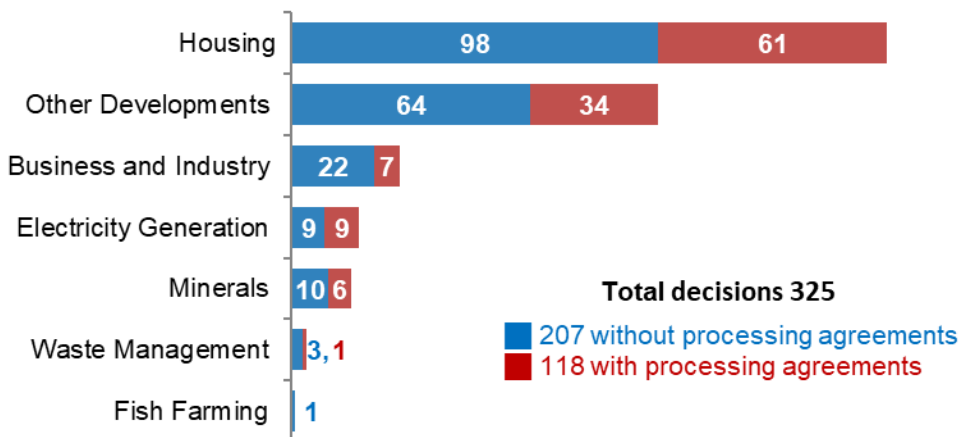
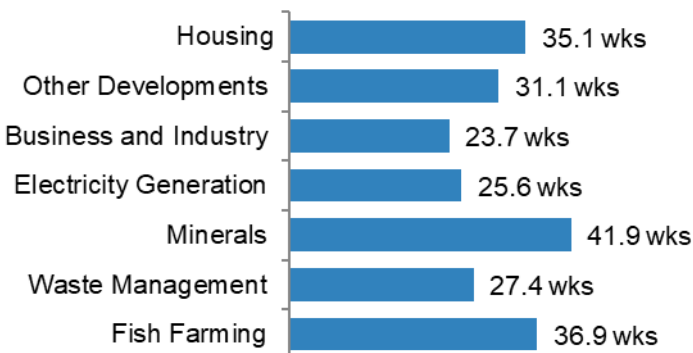


Chart 40: Major Developments by Development Type: Average decision time (weeks)



Overall average decision time for applications without processing agreements = 32.5 weeks

Table 3: Post 3 August 2009 Applications: Major Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type¹

Post-3rd August Major Developments	2018/19		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Housing	98	35.1	116	38.2	108	43.4	95	40.6	113	41.3	117	41.9	76	40.1
Other Developments	64	31.1	83	30.6	94	30.4	108	25.1	101	28.7	105	25.9	66	34.3
Business & Industry	22	23.7	17	25.5	26	33.2	23	19.9	39	33.1	41	26.6	45	22.8
Electricity Generation	9	25.6	9	36.5	10	32.6	16	31.7	19	53.6	27	58.4	24	50.7
Minerals	10	41.9	8	23.9	5	30.0	16	33.6	16	52.1	13	20.6	21	46.6
Waste Management	3	27.4	5	14.0	3	18.6	9	22.4	9	18.4	7	23.7	5	22.3
Fish Farming	1	36.9	0	-	0	-	1	18.0	1	31.6	0	-	1	4.4
TOTAL	207	32.5	238	33.6	246	36.4	268	31.0	298	36.6	310	34.6	238	36.3

Table 4: All Applications: Major Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type^{1,2}

All Applications Major Developments	2018/19		2017/18		2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Housing					108	43.4	105	52.1	125	54.1	147	69.9	104	74.8
Other Developments					96	30.3	111	26.3	103	32.9	115	38.7	73	46.2
Business & Industry					26	33.2	23	19.9	41	41.3	45	39.8	51	56.2
Electricity Generation					10	32.6	17	53.7	21	69.1	27	58.4	28	64.4
Minerals					6	39.0	18	41.8	17	70.0	15	59.0	23	47.4
Waste Management					3	18.6	9	22.4	10	24.8	7	23.7	7	87.4
Fish Farming					0	-	1	18.0	1	31.6	0	-	1	4.4
TOTAL					249	36.4	284	37.8	318	46.4	356	53.8	287	61.1

1. Figures do not include applications subject to processing agreements.

2. The analysis in Sections 2 to 5 covers applications validated in the current planning system, post 3rd August 2009. For applications decided prior to quarter one 2017/18, where appropriate, figures are provided for both post 3rd August 2009 applications and all applications including legacy cases. From quarter one 2017/18, because of the limited number of legacy cases still being processed, figures are only shown for applications validated post 3rd August 2009. Analysis of the limited number of decided legacy cases is provided separately in [Section 11](#).

6. Delegation Rates

Schemes of Delegation identify who will make the planning authority's decision on different types of planning application, whether it be an appointed officer or elected members. This also influences the route for any subsequent appeal. These schemes are required by legislation and are available on the websites of each planning authority.

The delegation rates shown below measure the proportion of planning decisions that are made by appointed officers ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 34](#)). The delegation rate for 2018/19 was 95.8%. This is the highest delegation rate over the past seven years.

Table 5: Percentage of all applications delegated in period

2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13
95.8%	95.7%	95.3%	94.9%	94.5%	92.6%	91.2%

7. Approval Rates

The overall rate of approvals for all types of application was 93.7% for the year 2018/19 [Annual, 2018/19: Table 33](#).

Table 6: Percentage of all applications approved in period

2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13
93.7%	93.7%	94.2%	93.8%	93.9%	94.1%	92.8%

8. Appeals and Local Reviews

If an applicant does not agree with the decision of a planning authority then they can ask for a review or appeal of the decision. They can also ask for a review or appeal if the authority doesn't make a decision within the time period set by law. If the application was decided by a planning officer on behalf of the authority, then the decision is reviewed by the Local Review Body, which is a group of three or more elected councillors. If the application was decided by councillors, then the appeal is made to Scottish Ministers.

Local Review Bodies dealt with 583 cases in 2018/19, of which 59.9% had the original decision upheld. In the previous year 61.1% (of 525 cases) had the original decision upheld ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 30](#)).

In addition, 52.6% (of 333 cases) of delegated appeals to Scottish Ministers in 2018/19 had the original decision upheld. This compares with 61.4% (of 303 cases) for 2017/18 ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 31](#)).

9. Enforcement Activity

Enforcement covers the actions that can be taken when developments happen without permission or when conditions have not been followed. There can be a variety of actions that are taken. Authorities have powers to serve notices asking for more information about a development. They can stop a development that does not have permission, or where the development does not follow the conditions attached to the permission which was granted. The Authority can also issue a fixed penalty or refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.

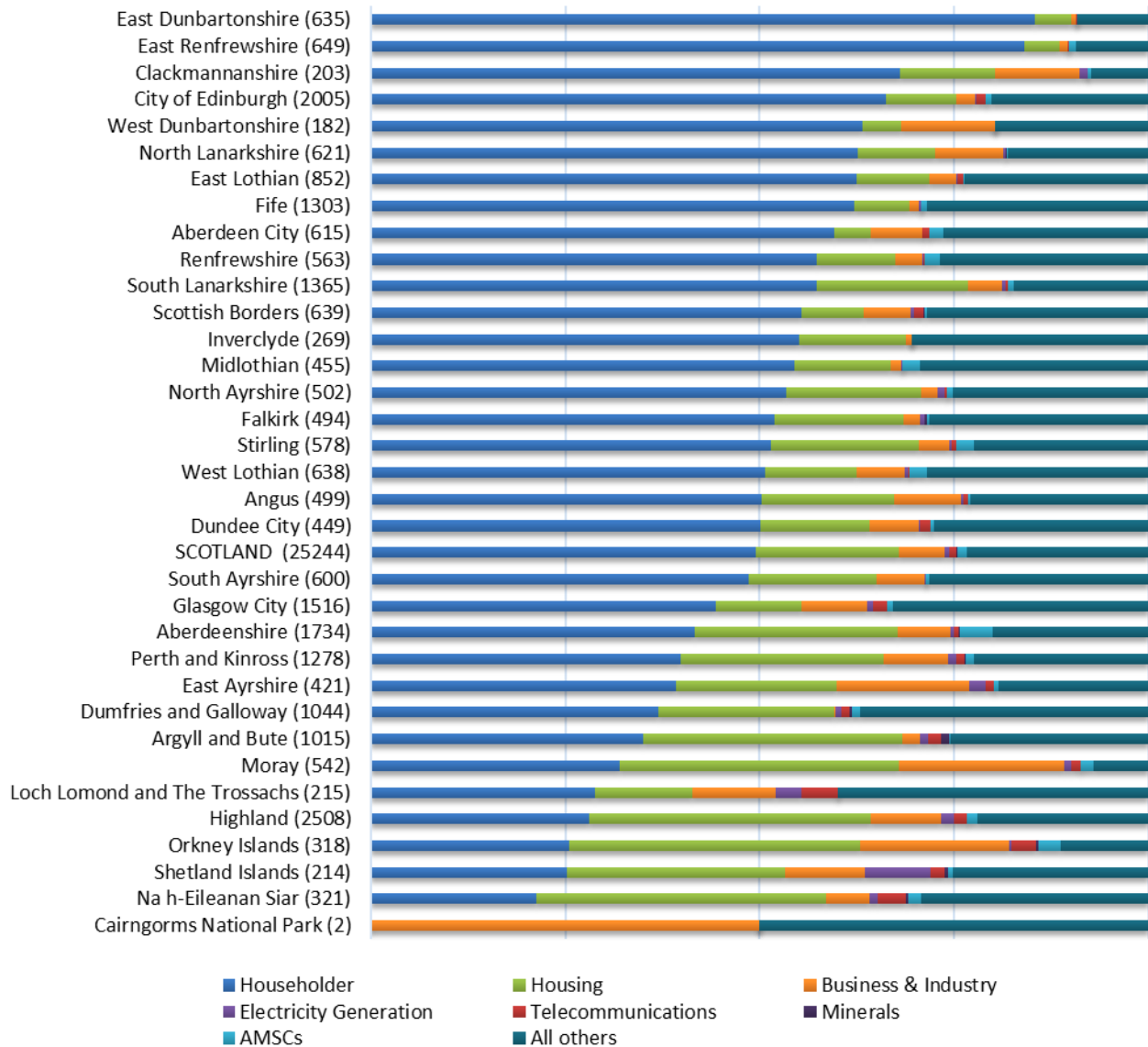
The total number of enforcement cases taken up in 2018/19 was 5,447. There were 540 notices served, three reports to the Procurator Fiscal and no cases resulting in prosecution. ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 32](#)).

10. Applications by Planning Authority

10.1. Local Developments

10.1.1. Local developments by development type

Chart 41: Local Developments by Planning Authority and Development



1. The number in brackets gives the total number of local development decisions by planning authority (excluding legacy cases and applications with processing agreements).

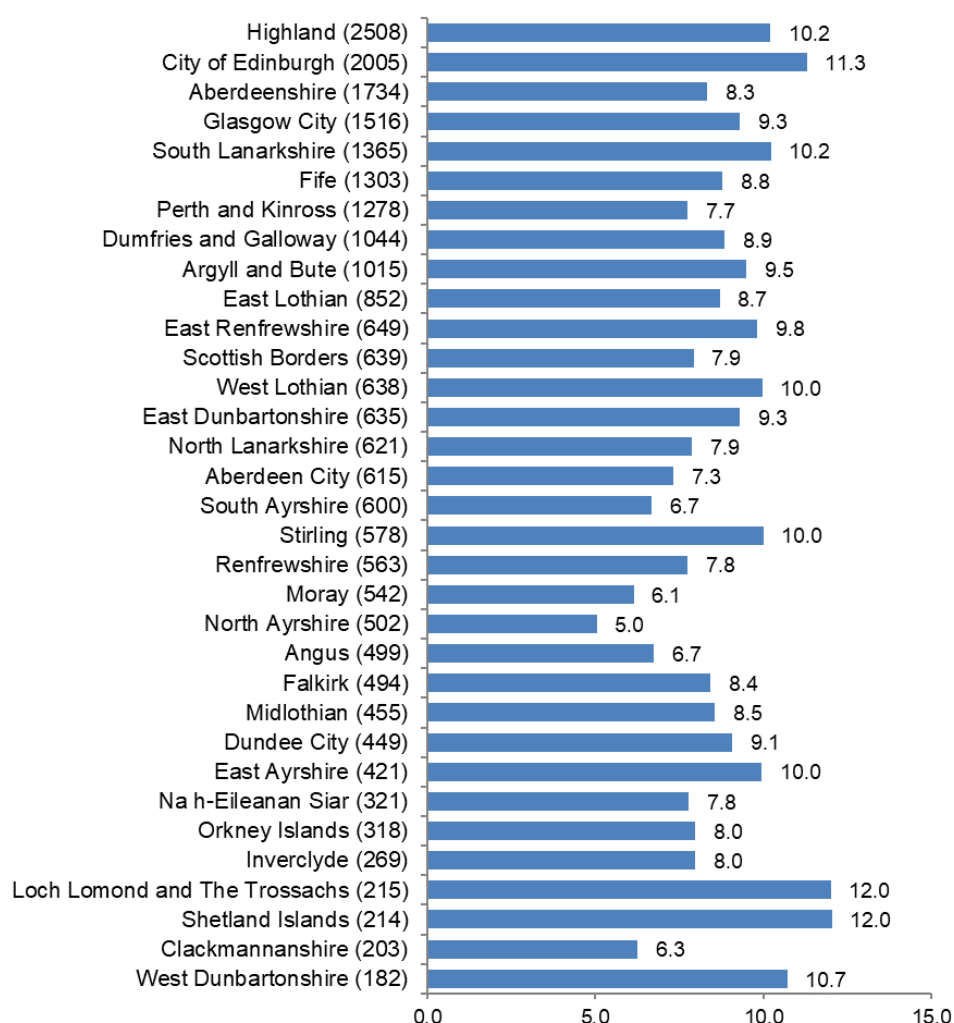
For 20 planning authorities over half of decisions made on local developments without processing agreements were for householder applications. In the Cairngorms National Park there were no decisions for householder applications. The case mix may influence overall average decision times within a particular authority. For example, given that householder applications are on average decided more quickly than other types, it might be expected that overall average decision times will be lower for those planning authorities that have a higher proportion of householder applications in their case mix.

10.1.2. Local developments – average decision times

Charts 42 and 43 show average decision times for local developments without processing agreements and the percentages of decisions made in less than two months ordered by the number of decisions made for local developments in each planning authority ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 4](#)). In total there were 25,244 decisions made on local developments not subject to processing agreements in 2017/18 with an overall average decision time of 9.0 weeks.

Information on decision times for previous years is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2018/19 Annual](#).

Chart 42: Local Developments by planning authority, 2018/19: Average decision time (weeks)

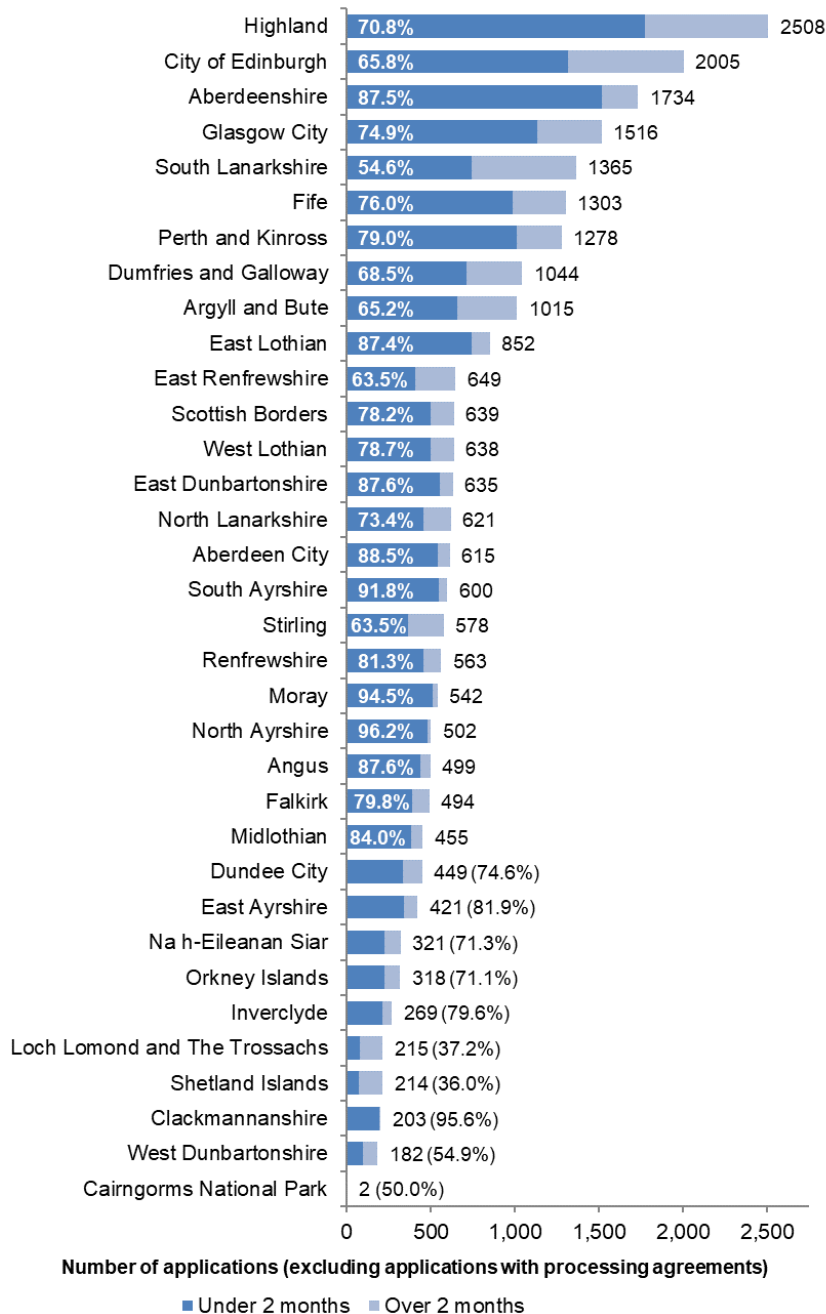


1. The number in brackets gives the total number of local development decisions by planning authority (excluding applications with processing agreements).

The average decision time for the Cairngorms National Park (18.6 weeks for two applications) has not been shown in the above chart. It is expected that Cairngorms has a longer average decision time as they do not receive planning applications directly but are notified of applications which have been made to those planning authorities within the National Park boundaries. Cairngorms National Park may then decide to call applications in for their determination. Planning applications are likely

to have already been in the system for a number of weeks before being transferred to Cairngorms National Park. In addition, Cairngorms National Park have no householder applications in their case mix for 2018/19.

Chart 43: Local Developments by planning authority, 2017/18: Percentage under 2 months



At Scotland level the percentage of decisions made in less than two months was 75.1%. Highland made the most decisions on local developments without processing agreements (2,508) and 70.8% of these were made in less than 2 months.

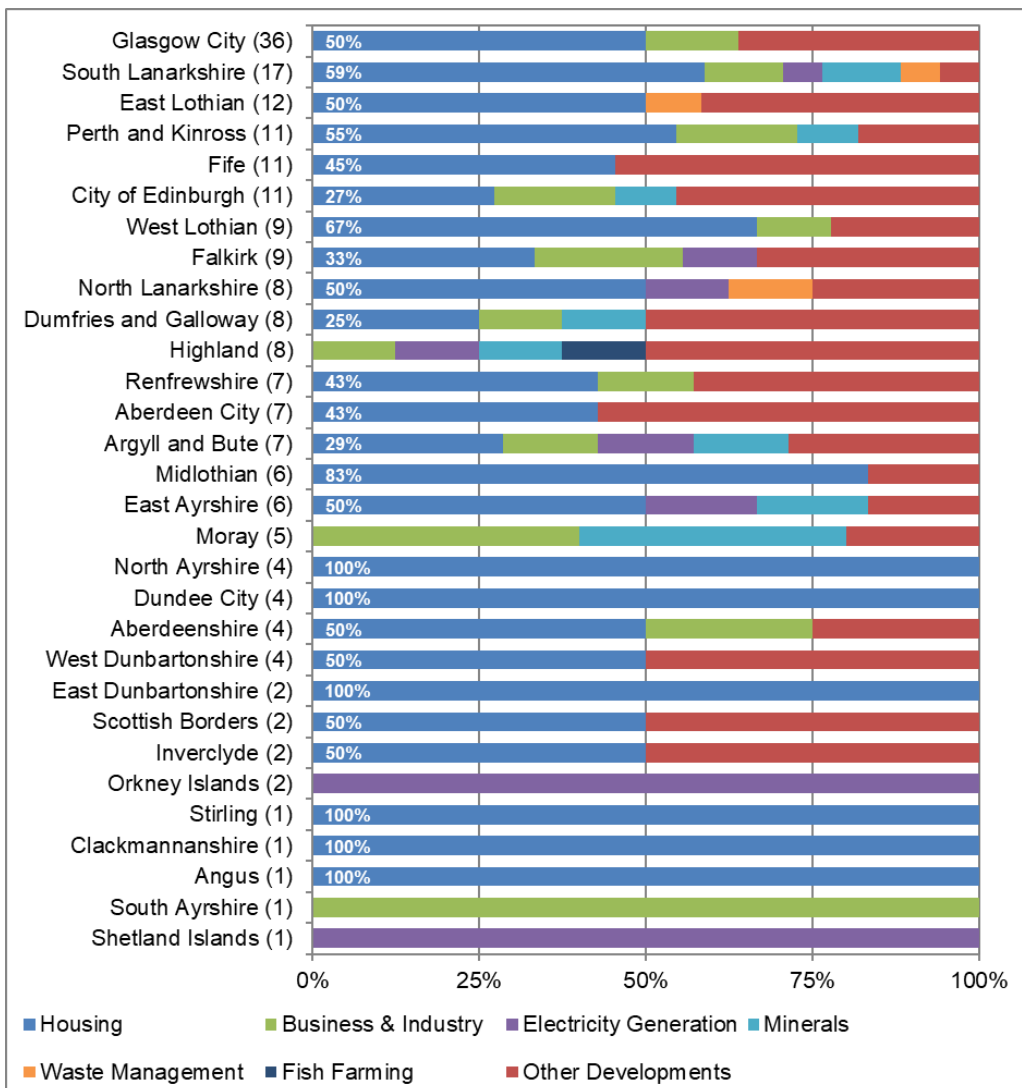
10.2. Major Developments

Cairngorms National Park, Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, East Renfrewshire and Na h-Eileanan Siar did not make decisions for any major developments without processing agreements in 2018/19 and are therefore not included in the charts in this section.

10.2.1. Major developments by development type

Chart 44 shows the case mix of major developments not subject to processing agreements for each planning authority, ordered by total number of applications.

Chart 44: Major Developments by Development Type and planning authority



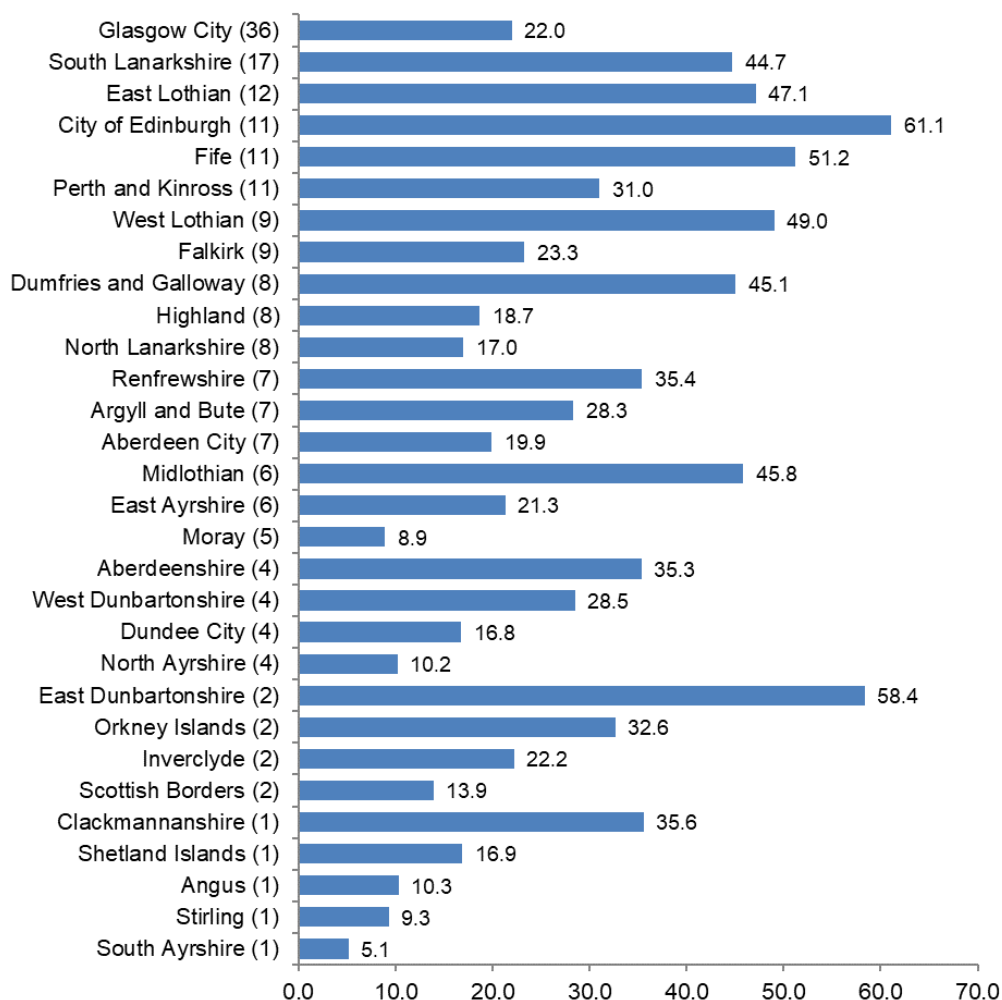
1. The number in brackets gives the total number of major development decisions by planning authority (excluding applications with processing agreements). Where appropriate the percentage of applications for Major housing is shown.

There were 207 decisions made for major developments without processing agreements in 2018/19. Glasgow made the most decisions (36) for major planning applications without processing agreements.

10.2.2. Major developments – average decision times

In total there were 207 decisions made on major developments without processing agreements in 2018/19 with an overall average decision time of 32.5 weeks ([Annual, 2018/19: Table 2](#)).

Chart 45: Major Developments by planning authority, 2018/19: Average decision time (weeks)



Numbers of decisions made for major developments are very small compared to those for local developments and average decision times at local authority level are likely to be volatile.

Due to the small numbers of major applications, especially at local authority level, average times are more variable. Fourteen local authorities have reduced their overall average decision time for major applications compared to 2017/18, while 15 have reported increases in decision times. The remaining five did not have major applications in both years.

Information on decision times for previous years is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2018/19 Annual](#).

11. Legacy Cases

In 2018/19 ten legacy cases were decided; seven for applications without processing agreements and 3 for applications with processing agreements.

Tables 7 to 10 show the legacy cases decided in 2018/19 by planning authority and development type.

Tables 7 and 8: Decided legacy applications without processing agreements, by planning authority and development type

Table 7

Local Authority	Number of Legacy Cases	Average Time (Weeks)
City of Edinburgh ¹	1	299.3
East Lothian ¹	3	101.2
Falkirk ¹	1	129.4
West Lothian ¹	2	163.6
Total	7	151.4

Table 8

Development Type	Number of Legacy Cases	Average Time (Weeks)
Housing - Major ¹	1	122.4
Housing - Local ¹	3	229.8
Other developments - Major ¹	1	129.4
Other developments - Local ¹	1	58.0
Listed Building and Conservation Area Consents ¹	1	60.3
Total	7	151.4

1. Time has been removed from decision times when delays were outwith the control of the local authority.

Tables 9 and 10: Decided legacy applications with processing agreements, by planning authority and development type

Table 9

Local Authority	Number of Legacy Cases	Percentage meeting agreed timescales
City of Edinburgh ¹	1	100%
East Ayrshire ¹	1	100%
South Ayrshire	1	100%
Total	3	100%

Table 10

Development Type	Number of Legacy Cases	Percentage meeting agreed timescales
Housing - Major	1	100%
Housing - Local	1	100%
Electricity Generation - Local	1	100%
Total	3	100%

1. Time has been removed from decision times when delays were outwith the control of the local authority.

12. Stopping the Clock

Stopping the clock is used where there has been a lengthy delay caused by the applicant or external consultees, outwith the planning authority's control. This helps produce more accurate and relevant performance statistics that would otherwise have been skewed by extreme cases of delay outwith the planning authority's control.

For 2018/19 there were 1,921 applications where the clock was stopped for an average of 13.7 weeks. This compares to 1,394 applications stopped for an average of 19.8 weeks in the previous year.

Table 11: Clock stops by planning authority, 2018/19^{1,2}

Planning Authority	Total applications decided in 2018/19	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
Aberdeen City	858	30	3.5%	34.2
Aberdeenshire	1,979	25	1.3%	4.7
Angus	602	0	-	-
Argyll and Bute	1,276	95	7.4%	16.5
Cairngorms National Park	2	0	-	-
Clackmannanshire	245	23	9.4%	5.1
Dumfries and Galloway	1,257	56	4.5%	23.5
Dundee City	640	31	4.8%	21.7
East Ayrshire ²	525	76	14.5%	8.6
East Dunbartonshire	709	159	22.4%	4.4
East Lothian ²	1,091	84	7.7%	13.3
East Renfrewshire	701	8	1.1%	16.1
City of Edinburgh	3,322	9	0.3%	120.0
Falkirk ²	602	21	3.5%	12.5
Fife	1,860	28	1.5%	7.3
Glasgow City	2,345	312	13.3%	11.6
Highland	2,987	169	5.7%	20.2
Inverclyde	344	37	10.8%	10.0
Loch Lomond and The Trossachs Na	278	62	22.3%	15.2
Midlothian ²	557	49	8.8%	14.8
Moray	635	177	27.9%	8.8
Na h-Eileanan Siar	400	2	0.5%	26.8
North Ayrshire	601	26	4.3%	6.5
North Lanarkshire	799	12	1.5%	54.1
Orkney Islands	417	75	18.0%	9.4
Perth and Kinross	1,620	91	5.6%	14.9
Renfrewshire	732	97	13.3%	9.4
Scottish Borders	826	4	0.5%	21.1
Shetland Islands	257	26	10.1%	4.3
South Ayrshire	806	2	0.2%	3.8
South Lanarkshire	1,600	21	1.3%	19.1
Stirling	730	1	0.1%	23.4
West Dunbartonshire	221	65	29.4%	9.4
West Lothian ²	861	48	5.6%	33.1
SCOTLAND^{1,2}	32,685	1,921	5.9%	13.7

1. Applications with Processing Agreements are not included in this analysis.

2. Includes Legacy Cases.

Table 12: Clock stops by development type, 2018/19

Development Type	Total applications decided in 2018/19	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
Local developments				
Householder	12,482	392	3.1%	4.9
Other developments	5,859	378	6.5%	13.6
Housing	4,648	587	12.6%	17.1
Business and industry	1,477	154	10.4%	11.8
AMSCs (under 2 months)	289	53	18.3%	25.9
Telecommunications	230	14	6.1%	7.5
Electricity generation	180	33	18.3%	14.5
Minerals	26	7	26.9%	38.1
Waste management	20	4	20.0%	7.4
Marine finfish farming	20	7	35.0%	16.7
Marine shellfish farming	11	-	0.0%	-
Freshwater fish farming	2	1	50.0%	27.3
TOTAL	25,244	1,630	6.5%	13.1
Major developments				
Housing	98	26	26.5%	34.0
Other developments	64	11	17.2%	29.1
Business and industry	22	9	40.9%	20.3
Minerals	10	3	30.0%	70.6
Electricity generation	9	3	33.3%	147.2
Waste management	3	-	0.0%	-
Freshwater fish farming	1	-	0.0%	-
TOTAL	207	52	25.1%	39.3
Other Consents				
Listed building and conservation area consent	3,328	159	4.8%	12.8
Advertisements	1,766	55	3.1%	7.7
Hazardous substances	16	6	37.5%	34.8
Other consents and certificates	2,092	12	0.6%	8.4
TOTAL	7,202	232	3.2%	11.9
Applications with EIA				
Local applications with EIA	26	6	23.1%	18.9
AMSCs (under 4 months)	1	1	100.0%	47.3
TOTAL	27	7	25.9%	22.9

1. Applications with processing Agreements are not included in this analysis.

2. Includes Legacy Cases.

For 2018/19, local housing developments have the most applications where the clock has been stopped, with 17.1 weeks on average removed from decision times. This represents 12.6% of all applications for local housing developments.

There are a variety of reasons why the clock is stopped but stops are often due to delays in concluding legal agreements and waiting for the applicant to sign a planning obligation. Other reasons include site surveys required in relation to European protected species that must await a particular season, external consultants delay or awaiting advert fees to be paid.

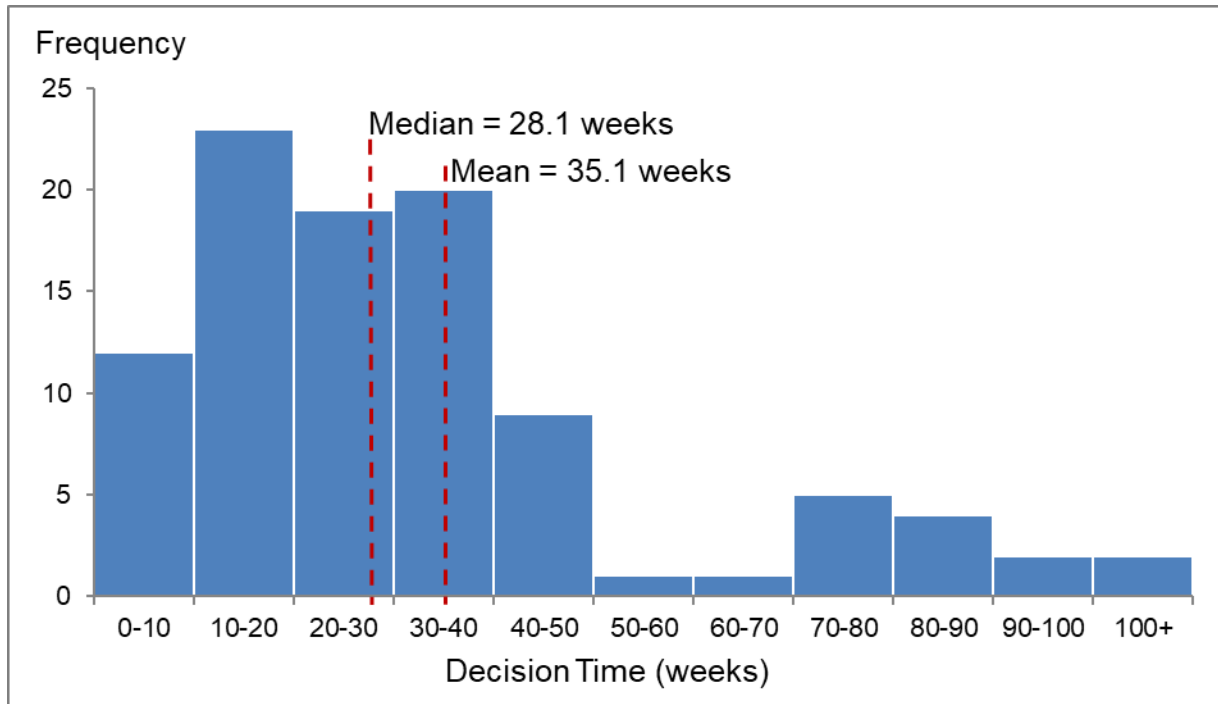
Stop the clock advice has been issued to planning authorities to help with decisions for stopping the clock and is available at

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>.

13. Annex

13.1. Distribution of decision times for major applications

Chart 46: Distribution of decision times for Major Housing developments 2018/19 (excludes one legacy case).

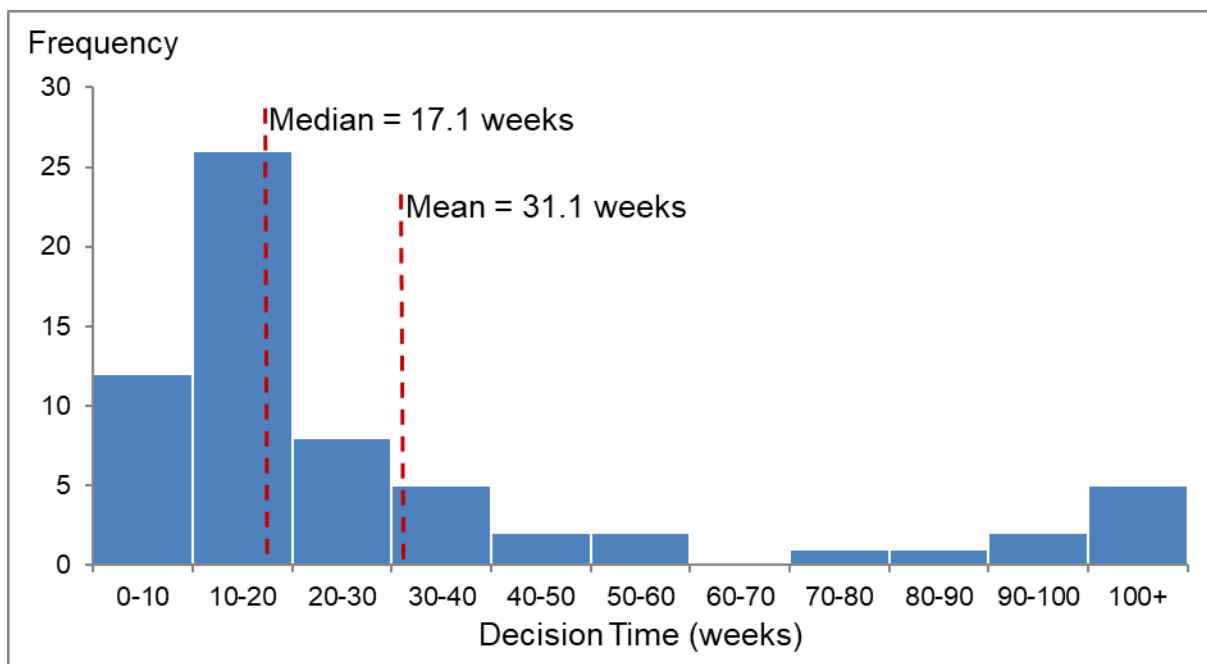


The vertical line at 35.1 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major housing developments. The second line at 28.1 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 2.6 weeks to 234.1 weeks. The chart shows that the mean decision time has been influenced by several lengthy decisions. Just over 60% of major housing applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 35.1 weeks. 46% of major housing applications were decided within 6 months.

The five lengthiest decisions took 234.1 weeks (4.5 years), 145.1 weeks (2.8 years), 94.7 weeks (1.8 years), 92.7 weeks (1.8 years) and 86.4 weeks (1.7 years). The lengthiest application was for planning permission in principle for a 7.6 hectare residential development in West Lothian. The application was approved.

Chart 47 shows the distribution of the decision times for major other developments. The category “other developments” includes any developments not falling wholly within any of the specific categories of development for minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, fish farming. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects.

Chart 47: Distribution of decision times for major other developments 2018/19 (excludes one legacy case).

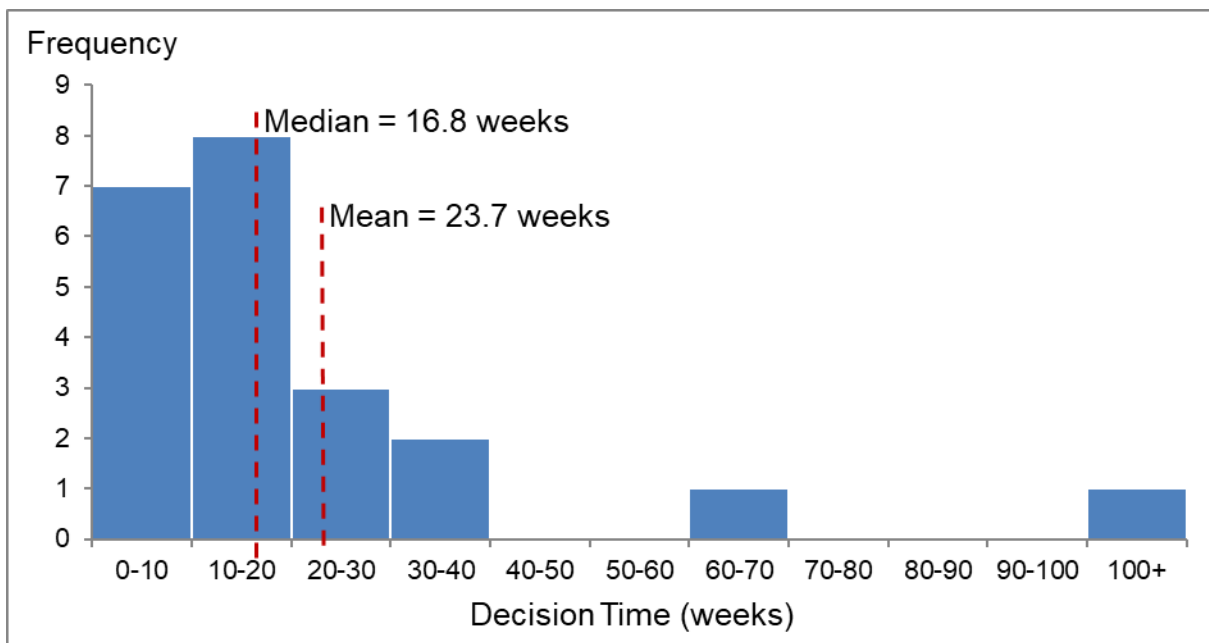


The vertical line at 31.1 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major other developments. The second line at 17.1 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 3.4 weeks to 133.0 weeks. The chart shows that the average decision time has been influenced by several lengthy decisions. Almost three quarters of major other developments (72%) were decided in a time quicker than the average of 31.1 weeks and 67% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision, which was in Dumfries and Galloway, took 133 weeks (2.6 years) and was for planning permission in principle for residential and business units development at a former golf course. The application was approved.

Chart 48 shows the distribution of the decision times for major business and industry developments concluded in 2018/19. The category “business and industry” developments include construction of a building or structure for any of the following: use as an office, for research and development of products or processes, for any industrial process or for use for storage or as a distribution centre. To be classed as major the gross floor space as a result of the development must exceed 10,000 square metres or the site area must exceed 2 hectares. Due to the small numbers of applications for major business and industry developments, average decision times are very variable.

Chart 48: Distribution of decision times for major business and industry applications, 2018/19

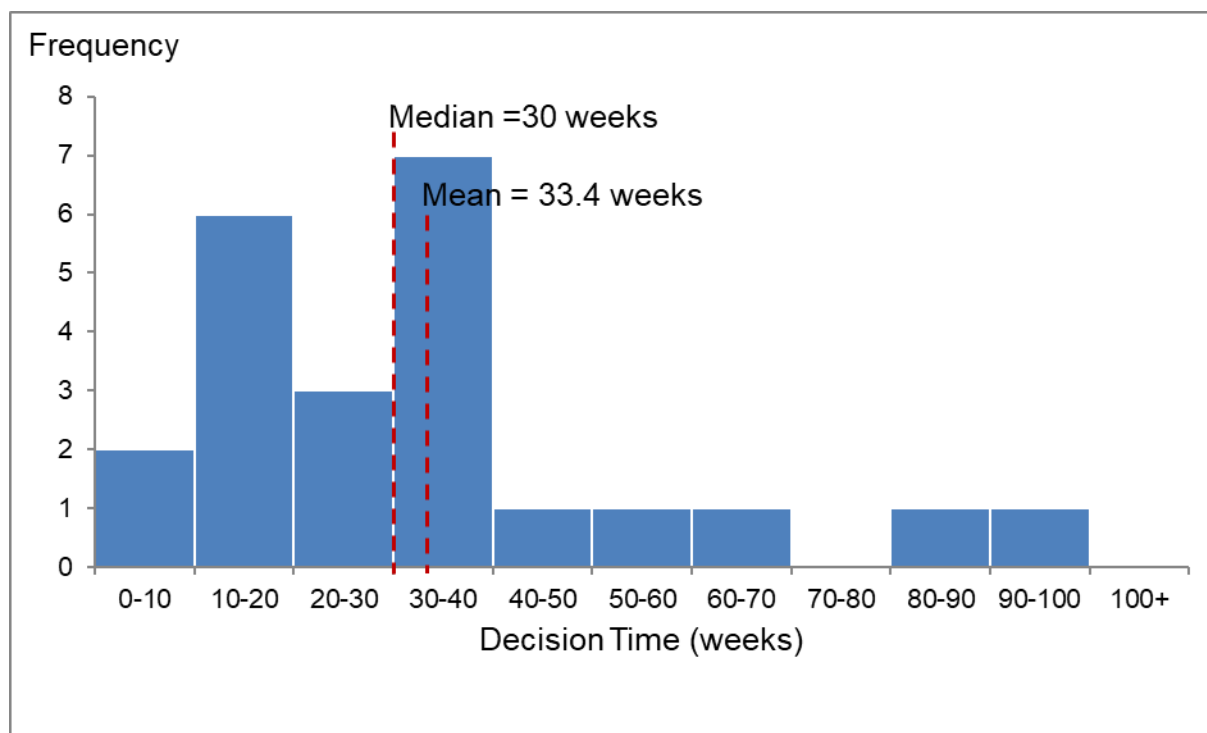


The vertical line at 23.7 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major business and industry developments. The second line at 16.8 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 1.6 weeks to 143.9 weeks. Almost 73% of major business and industry applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 23.7 weeks with the just over 77% decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision, taking 143.9 weeks was in City of Edinburgh and is described as mixed use development including hotel and restaurant/bar with associated car parking, servicing, access arrangements and landscaping. The application was approved.

Chart 49 shows the distribution of the decision times for the remaining major applications that were concluded in 2018/19. These include applications for minerals, waste management, electricity generation and freshwater fish farming.

Chart 49: Distribution of decision times for remaining major applications 2018/19



The vertical line at 33.4 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for the remaining major developments. The second line at 30.0 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 8.6 weeks to 97.6 weeks. The average decision time has been slightly skewed by a few lengthy decisions. Almost 57% of the remaining major applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 33.4 weeks, 43% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 97.6 weeks was an application for amendments to conditions for an application for a mineral development in South Lanarkshire involving extraction of sand and gravel with restoration to form a balancing pond, wetland, agriculture and grassland.

13.2. Statistics for other UK countries

Information and statistics on planning applications for the other UK countries can be accessed at the following links:

England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-applications-statistics>

Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningstats/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland: <http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/about-statistics.htm>

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e-mail: statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

are available in more detail through statistics.gov.uk

are available via excel spreadsheets on the Planning Statistics webpages at:
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

Details for individual planning applications are also available on planning authorities' eplanning websites.

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.

cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

Complaints and suggestions

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ISBN 978-1-83960-026-5 (web only)

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